



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





6000626040







THE
ILIAD OF HOMER

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE.

BY
EDWARD EARL OF DERBY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

FIFTH EDITION, REVISED.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1865.

293. e. 8.



LONDON: PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET,
AND CHANCERY CROSS.

TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
ALBERT EDWARD PRINCE OF WALES, K.G.

dc. dc. dc.

THIS TRANSLATION OF
THE ILIAD OF HOMER
IS BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S GRACIOUS PERMISSION
WITH PROFOUND RESPECT AND DUTIFUL ATTACHMENT
HUMBLY DEDICATED.

P R E F A C E.

IN the spring of 1862 I was induced, at the request of some personal friends, to print, for private circulation only, a small volume of "Translations of Poems Ancient and Modern," in which was included the first Book of the *Iliad*. The opinions expressed by some competent judges of the degree of success which had attended this "attempt to infuse into an almost literal English version something of the spirit, as well as the simplicity, of the great original,"* were sufficiently favourable to encourage me to continue the work which I had begun. It has afforded me, in the intervals of more urgent business, an unfailing, and constantly increasing source of interest; and it is not without a feeling of regret at the completion of my task, and a sincere diffidence as to its success, that I venture to submit the result of my labours to the ordeal of public criticism.

Various causes, irrespective of any demerits of the work itself, forbid me to anticipate for this translation

* Introduction to unpublished volume.

any extensive popularity. First, I fear that the taste for, and appreciation of, Classical Literature are greatly on the decline; next, those who have kept up their classical studies, and are able to read and enjoy the original, will hardly take an interest in a mere translation; while the English reader, unacquainted with Greek, will naturally prefer the harmonious versification and polished brilliancy of Pope's translation; with which, as a happy adaptation of the Homeric story to the spirit of English poetry, I have not the presumption to enter into competition. But, admirable as it is, Pope's *Iliad* can hardly be said to be Homer's *Iliad*; and there may be some who, having lost the familiarity with the original language which they once possessed, may, if I have at all succeeded in my attempt, have recalled to their minds a faint echo of the strains which delighted their earlier days, and may recognize some slight trace of the original perfume.

Numerous as have been the translators of the *Iliad*, or of parts of it, the metres which have been selected have been almost as various: the ordinary couplet in rhyme, the Spenserian stanza, the Trochaic or Ballad metre, all have had their partisans, even to that "pestilent heresy" of the so-called English Hexameter; a metre wholly repugnant to the genius of our language; which can only be pressed into the service by a viola-

tion of every rule of prosody ; and of which, notwithstanding my respect for the eminent men who have attempted to naturalize it, I could never read ten lines without being irresistibly reminded of Canning's

"Dactyls call'st thou them ? God help thee, silly one !"

But in the progress of this work, I have been more and more confirmed in the opinion which I expressed at its commencement, that (whatever may be the extent of my own individual failure) "if justice is ever to be done to the easy flow and majestic simplicity of the grand old Poet, it can only be in the Heroic blank verse." I have seen isolated passages admirably rendered in other metres ; and there are many instances in which a translation line for line and couplet for couplet naturally suggests itself, and in which it is sometimes difficult to avoid an involuntary rhyme ; but the blank verse appears to me the only metre capable of adapting itself to all the gradations, if I may use the term, of the Homeric style ; from the finished poetry of the numerous similes, in which every touch is nature, and nothing is overcoloured or exaggerated, down to the simple, almost homely, style of some portions of the narrative. Least of all can any other metre do full justice to the spirit and freedom of the various speeches, in which the old warriors give utterance, without dis-

guise or restraint, to all their strong and genuine emotions. To subject these to the trammels of couplet and rhyme would be as destructive of their chief characteristics, as the application of a similar process to the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, or the tragedies of Shakespeare; the effect indeed may be seen by comparing, with some of the noblest speeches of the latter, the few couplets which he seems to have considered himself bound by custom to tack on to their close, at the end of a scene or an act.

I have adopted, not without hesitation, the Latin, rather than the Greek, nomenclature for the Heathen Deities. I have been induced to do so from the manifest incongruity of confounding the two; and from the fact that though English readers may be familiar with the names of Zeus, or Aphrodite, or even Poseidon, those of Hera, or Ares, or Hephæstus, or Leto, would hardly convey to them a definite signification.

It has been my aim throughout to produce a translation, and not a paraphrase; not indeed such a translation as would satisfy, with regard to each word, the rigid requirements of accurate scholarship; but such as would fairly and honestly give the sense and spirit of every passage, and of every line; omitting nothing, and expanding nothing; and adhering, as closely as our language will allow, ever to every epithet which is

capable of being translated, and which has, in the particular passage, anything of a special and distinctive character. Of the many deficiencies in my execution of this intention, I am but too conscious; whether I have been in any degree successful, must be left to the impartial decision of such of the Public as may honour this work with their perusal.

D.

KNOWSLEY, OCT., 1864.

NOTE TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

THE favourable reception which has been given to the first Editions of this work, far exceeding my most sanguine hopes, affords a gratifying proof how far, in my preface, I had overrated the extent to which the taste for, and appreciation of, Classical Literature had declined. It will not, I hope, be thought extraordinary that some errors and inaccuracies should have found their way into a Translation executed, I must admit, somewhat hastily, and with less of the "limæ labor" than I should have bestowed upon it, had I ventured to anticipate for it so extensive a circulation. My

thanks, therefore, are due to those Critics, who, either publicly or privately, have called my attention to passages in which the sense of the Author has been either incorrectly or imperfectly rendered. All of these I have examined, and have availed myself of several of the suggestions offered for their correction; and a careful revision of the whole work, and renewed comparison with the original, have enabled me to discover other defects, the removal of which will, I hope, render the present Edition, especially in the eyes of Classical Scholars, somewhat more worthy of the favour which has been accorded to its predecessors.

D.

ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, MAY, 1865.

LIST OF BOOKS.

VOL. I.

	PAGE
BOOK I.	1
BOOK II.	34
BOOK III.	81
BOOK IV.	106
BOOK V.	135
BOOK VI.	183
BOOK VII.	211
BOOK VIII.	236
BOOK IX.	266
BOOK X.	304
BOOK XI.	334
BOOK XII.	379

HOMER'S ILIAD.

BOOK I.

OF Peleus' son, Achilles, sing, O Muse,
The vengeance, deep and deadly; whence to Greece
Unnumbered ills arose; which many a soul
Of mighty warriors to the viewless shades
Untimely sent; they on the battle plain 5
Unburied lay, a prey to ravening dogs,
And carrion birds; but so had Jove decreed,
From that sad day when first in wordy war,
The mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Confronted stood by Peleus' godlike son. 10
Say then, what God the fatal strife provoked?
Jove's and Latona's son; he, filled with wrath
Against the King, with deadly pestilence
The camp afflicted,—and the people died,—
For Chryses' sake, his priest, whom Atreus' son 15

With scorn dismissed, when to the Grecian ships
He came, his captive daughter to redeem,
With costly ransom charged; and in his hand
The sacred fillet of his God he bore,
And golden staff; to all he sued, but chief 20
To Atreus' sons, twin captains of the host:
"Ye sons of Atreus, and ye well-greaved Greeks,
May the great Gods, who on Olympus dwell,
Grant you yon hostile city to destroy,
And home return in safety; but my child 25
Restore, I pray; her proffered ransom take,
And in his priest, the Lord of light revere."

Then through the ranks assenting murmurs ran,
The priest to reverence, and the ransom take:
Not so Atrides; he, with haughty mien, 30
And bitter speech, the trembling sire addressed:
"Old man, I warn thee, that beside our ships
I find thee not, or lingering now, or back
Returning; lest thou prove of small avail
Thy golden staff, and fillet of thy God. 35
Her I release not, till her youth be fled;
Within my walls, in Argos, far from home,

Her lot is cast, domestic cares to ply,
And share a master's bed. For thee, begone!
Incense me not, lest ill betide thee now." 40

He said: the old man trembled, and obeyed;
Beside the many-dashing Ocean's shore
Silent he passed; and all apart, he prayed
To great Apollo, fair Latona's son:
"Hear me, God of the silver bow! whose care 45
Chrysa surrounds, and Cilla's lovely vale;
Whose sovereign sway o'er Tenedos extends;
O Smintheus, hear! if e'er my offered gifts
Found favour in thy sight; if e'er to thee
I burned the fat of bulls and choicest goats, 50
Grant me this boon—upon the Grecian host
Let thine unerring darts avenge my tears."

Thus as he prayed, his prayer Apollo heard:
Along Olympus' heights he passed, his heart
Burning with wrath; behind his shoulders hung 55
His bow, and ample quiver; at his back
Rattled the fateful arrows as he moved;
Like the night-cloud he passed; and from afar
He bent against the ships, and sped the bolt;

And fierce and deadly twanged the silver bow. 60
First on the mules and dogs, on man the last,
Was poured the arrowy storm; and through the camp,
Constant and numerous, blazed the funeral fires.

Nine days the heavenly Archer on the troops
Hurled his dread shafts; the tenth, th' assembled Greeks 65
Achilles called to council; so inspired
By Juno, white-armed Goddess, who beheld
With pitying eyes the wasting hosts of Greece.
When all were met, and closely thronged around,
Rose the swift-footed chief, and thus began: 70

"Great son of Atreus, to my mind there seems,
If we would 'scape from death, one only course,
Home to retrace our steps: since here at once
By war and pestilence our forces waste.
But seek we first some prophet, or some priest, 75
Or some wise vision-seer (since visions too
From Jove proceed), who may the cause explain,
Which with such deadly wrath Apollo fires:
If for neglected hecatombs or prayers
He blame us; or if fat of lambs and goats 80
May soothe his anger and the plague assuage."

This said, he sat; and Thestor's son arose,
Calchas, the chief of seers, to whom were known
The present, and the future, and the past;
Who, by his mystic art, Apollo's gift, 85
Guided to Ilium's shore the Grecian fleet.

Who thus with cautious speech replied, and said:
"Achilles, loved of Heaven, thou bidd'st me say
Why thus incensed the far-destroying King:
Therefore I speak; but promise thou, and swear, 90
By word and hand, to bear me harmless through.
For well I know my speech must one offend,
'The Argive chief, o'er all the Greeks supreme;
And terrible to men of low estate
The anger of a King; for though awhile 95
He veil his wrath, yet in his bosom pent
It still is nursed, until the time arrive;
Say, then, wilt thou protect me, if I speak?"

Him answered thus Achilles, swift of foot:
"Speak boldly out whate'er thine art can tell; 100
For by Apollo's self I swear, whom thou,
O Calchas, serv'st, and who thy words inspires,
That, while I live, and see the light of Heaven,

Not one of all the Greeks shall dare on thee,
Beside our ships, injurious hands to lay : 105
No, not if Agamemnon's self were he,
Who 'mid our warriors boasts the foremost place."

Emboldened thus, the unerring prophet spoke :
"Not for neglected hecatombs or prayers,
But for his priest, whom Agamemnon scorned, 110
Nor took his ransom, nor his child restored ;
On his account the Far-destroyer sends
This scourge of pestilence, and yet will send ;
Nor shall we cease his heavy hand to feel,
Till to her sire we give the bright-eyed girl, 115
Unbought, unransomed, and to Chrysa's shore
A solemn hecatomb despatch ; this done,
The God, appeased, his anger may remit."

This said, he sat ; and Atreus' godlike son,
The mighty monarch, Agamemnon, rose, 120
His dark soul filled with fury, and his eyes
Flashing like flames of fire ; on Calchas first
A withering glance he cast, and thus he spoke :

"Prophet of ill ! thou never speak'st to me
But words of evil omen ; for thy soul 125

Delights to augur ill, but aught of good
Thou never yet hast promised, nor performed.
And now among the Greeks thou spread'st abroad
Thy lying prophecies, that all these ills
Come from the Far-destroyer, for that I 130
Refused the ransom of my lovely prize,
And that I rather chose herself to keep,
To me not less than Clytemnestra dear,
My virgin-wedded wife; nor less adorned
In gifts of form, of feature, or of mind. 135
Yet, if it must be so, I give her back;
I wish my people's safety, not their death.
But seek me out forthwith some other spoil,
Lest empty-handed I alone appear
Of all the Greeks; for this would ill beseem; 140
And how I lose my present share, ye see."

To whom Achilles, swift of foot, replied:
"Haughtiest of men, and greediest of the prey!
How shall our valiant Greeks for thee seek out
Some other spoil? no common fund have we 145
Of hoarded treasures; what our arms have won
From captured towns, has been already shared,

Nor can we now resume the apportioned spoil.
Restore the maid, obedient to the God!
And if Heaven will that we the strong-built walls 150
Of Troy should raze, our warriors will to thee
A threefold, fourfold recompense assign."

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus:
"Think not, Achilles, valiant though thou art
In fight, and godlike, to defraud me thus; 155
Thou shalt not so persuade me, nor o'erreach.
Think'st thou to keep thy portion of the spoil,
While I with empty hands sit humbly down?
The bright-eyed girl thou bidd'st me to restore;
If then the valiant Greeks for me seek out 160
Some other spoil, some compensation just,
'Tis well: if not, I with my own right hand
Will from some other chief, from thee perchance,
Or Ajax, or Ulysses, wrest his prey;
And woe to him, on whomsoe'er I call! 165
But this for future counsel we remit:
Haste we then now our dark-ribbed bark to launch,
Musters a fitting crew, and place on board
The sacred hecatomb; then last embark

The fair Chryseis; and in chief command 170
Let some one of our councillors be placed,
Ajax, Ulysses, or Idomeneus,
Or thou, the most ambitious of them all,
That so our rites may soothe the angry God.”
To whom Achilles thus with scornful glance: 175
“ Oh, clothed in shamelessness! oh, sordid soul!
How canst thou hope that any Greek for thee
Will brave the toils of travel or of war?
Well dost thou know that 't was no feud of mine
With Troy's brave sons that brought me here in arms; 180
They never did me wrong; they never drove
My cattle, or my horses; never sought
In Phthia's fertile, life-sustaining fields
To waste the crops; for wide between us lay
The shadowy mountains and the roaring sea. 185
With thee, O void of shame! with thee we sailed,
For Menelæus and for thee, ingrate,
Glory and fame on Trojan crests to win.
All this hast thou forgotten, or despised;
And threatenest now to wrest from me the prize 190
I laboured hard to win, and Greeks bestowed.

Nor does my portion ever equal thine,
When on some populous town our troops have made
Successful war; in the contentious fight
The larger portion of the toil is mine; 195
But when the day of distribution comes,
Thine is the richest spoil; while I, forsooth,
Must be too well content to bear on board
Some paltry prize for all my warlike toil.
To Phthia now I go; so better far, 200
To steer my homeward course, and leave thee here,
But little like, I deem, dishonouring me,
To fill thy coffers with the spoils of war."

Whom answered Agamemnon, King of men:
"Fly then, if such thy mind! I ask thee not 205
On mine account to stay; others there are
Will guard my honour and avenge my cause:
And chief of all, the Lord of counsel, Jove!
Of all the Heaven-born Kings, thou art the man
I hate the most; for thou delight'st in nought 210
But war and strife: thy prowess I allow;
Yet this, remember, is the gift of Heaven.
Return then, with thy vessels, if thou wilt,

And with thy followers, home; and lord it there
Over thy Myrmidons! I heed thee not! 215
I care not for thy fury! Hear my threat:
Since Phœbus wrests Chryseis from my arms,
In mine own ship, and with mine own good crew,
Her I send forth; and, in her stead, I mean,
Ev'n from thy tent, myself, to bear thy prize, 220
The fair Briseis; that henceforth thou know
How far I am thy master; and that, taught
By thine example, others too may fear
To rival me, and brave me to my face."

Thus while he spake, Achilles chafed with rage; 225
And in his manly breast his heart was torn
With thoughts conflicting—whether from his side
To draw his mighty sword, and thrusting by
The assembled throng, to kill the insulting King;
Or school his soul, and keep his anger down. 230
But while in mind and spirit thus he mused,
And half unsheathed his sword, from Heaven came down
Minerva, sent by Juno, white-armed Queen,
Whose love and care both chiefs alike enjoyed.
She stood behind, and by the yellow hair 235

She held the son of Peleus, visible
To him alone, by all the rest unseen.
Achilles, wondering, turned, and straight he knew
The blue-eyed Pallas; awful was her glance;
Whom thus the chief with wingèd words addressed: 240

“Why com'st thou, child of ægis-bearing Jove?
To see the arrogance of Atreus' son?
But this I say, and will make good my words,
This insolence may cost him soon his life.”

To whom the blue-eyed Goddess thus replied: 245
“From Heaven I came, to curb, if thou wilt hear,
Thy fury; sent by Juno, white-armed Queen,
Whose love and care ye both alike enjoy.
Cease, then, these broils, and draw not thus thy sword;
In words, indeed, assail him as thou wilt. 250
But this I promise, and will make it good,
The time shall come, when for this insolence
A threefold compensation shall be thine;
Only be swayed by me, and curb thy wrath.”

Whom answered thus Achilles, swift of foot: 255
“Goddess, I needs must yield to your commands,
Indignant though I be—for so 'tis best;

Who hears the Gods, of them his prayers are heard."

He said; and on the silver hilt he stayed
His powerful hand, and flung his mighty sword 260
Back to its scabbard, to Minerva's word
Obedient: she her heavenward course pursued
To join the Immortals in the abode of Jove.
But Peleus' son, with undiminished wrath,
Atrides thus with bitter words addressed: 265

"Thou sot, with eye of dog, and heart of deer!
Who never dar'st to lead in armèd fight
Th' assembled host, nor with a chosen few
To man the secret ambush—for thou fear'st
To look on death—no doubt 'tis easier far, 270
Girt with thy troops, to plunder of his right
Whoe'er may venture to oppose thy will!
A tyrant King, because thou rul'st o'er slaves!
Were it not so, this insult were thy last.
But this I say, and with an oath confirm, 275
By this my royal staff, which never more
Shall put forth leaf nor spray, since first it left
Upon the mountain-side its parent stem,
Nor blossom more; since all around the axe

Hath lopped both leaf and bark, and now 'tis borne 280

Emblem of justice, by the sons of Greece,

Who guard the sacred ministry of law

Before the face of Jove! a mighty oath!

The time shall come, when all the sons of Greece

Shall mourn Achilles' loss; and thou the while, 285

Heart-rent, shalt be all-impotent to aid,

When by the warrior-slayer Hector's hand

Many shall fall; and then thy soul shall mourn

The slight on Grecia's bravest warrior cast."

Thus spoke Pelides; and upon the ground 290

He cast his staff, with golden studs embossed,

And took his seat; on the other side, in wrath,

Atrides burned; but Nestor interposed;

Nestor, the leader of the Pylian host,

The smooth-tongued chief, from whose persuasive lips 295

Sweeter than honey flowed the stream of speech.

Two generations of the sons of men

For him were past and gone, who with himself

Were born and bred on Pylos' lovely shore,

And o'er the third he now held royal sway. 300

He thus with prudent words the chiefs addressed:

“Alas, alas! what grief is this for Greece!
What joy for Priam, and for Priam's sons!
What exultation for the men of Troy,
To hear of feuds 'tween you, of all the Greeks 305
The first in council, and the first in fight!
Yet, hear my words, I pray; in years, at least,
Ye both must yield to me; and in times past
I lived with men, and they despised me not,
Ablèr in counsel, greater than yourselves. 310
Such men I never saw, and ne'er shall see,
As Pirithous and Dryas, wise and brave,
Cœneus, Exadius, godlike Polypheme,
And Theseus, Ægeus' more than mortal son.
The mightiest they among the sons of men; 315
The mightiest they, and of the forest beasts
Strove with the mightiest, and their rage subdued.
With them from distant lands, from Pylos' shore
I joined my forces, and their call obeyed;
With them I played my part; with them, not one 320
Would dare to fight of mortals now on earth.
Yet they my counsels heard, my voice obeyed;
And hear ye also, for my words are wise.

Nor thou, though great thou be, attempt to rob
Achilles of his prize, but let him keep 325
The spoil assigned him by the sons of Greece;
Nor thou, Pelides, with the monarch strive
In rivalry; for ne'er to sceptred King
Hath Jove such powers, as to Atrides, given;
And valiant though thou art, and Goddess-born, 330
Yet mightier he, for wider is his sway.
Atrides, curb thy wrath! while I beseech
Achilles to forbear; in whom the Greeks
From adverse war their great defender see."

To whom the monarch, Agamemnon, thus: 335
"O father, full of wisdom are thy words;
But this proud chief o'er all would domineer;
O'er all he seeks to rule, o'er all to reign,
To all to dictate; which I will not bear.
Grant that the Gods have given him warlike might, 340
Gave they unbridled license to his tongue?"

To whom Achilles, interrupting, thus:
"Coward and slave indeed I might be deemed,
Could I submit to make thy word my law;
To others thy commands; seek not to me 345

To dictate, for I follow thee no more.

But hear me speak, and ponder what I say:

For the fair girl I fight not (since you choose

To take away the prize yourselves bestowed)

With thee or any one; but of the rest 350

My dark swift ship contains, against my will

On nought shalt thou, unpunished, lay thy hand.

Make trial if thou wilt, that these may know;

Thy life-blood soon should reek upon my spear."

After this conflict keen of angry speech, 355

The chiefs arose, the assembly was dispersed.

With his own followers, and Menœtius' son,
Achilles to his tents and ships withdrew.

But Atreus' son launched a swift-sailing bark,

With twenty rowers manned, and placed on board 360

The sacred hecatomb; then last embarked

The fair Chryseis, and in chief command

Laertes' son, the sage Ulysses, placed.

They swiftly sped along the watery way.

Next, proclamation through the camp was made 365

To purify the host; and in the sea,

Obedient to the word, they purified;

Then to Apollo solemn rites performed
With faultless hecatombs of bulls and goats,
Upon the margin of the watery waste; 370
And, wreathed in smoke, the savour rose to Heaven.

The camp thus occupied, the King pursued
His threatened plan of vengeance; to his side
Calling Talthibius and Eurybates,
Heralds, and faithful followers, thus he spoke: 375

“Haste to Achilles’ tent, and in your hand
Back with you thence the fair Briseis bring:
If he refuse to send her, I myself
With a sufficient force will bear her thence,
Which he may find, perchance, the worse for him.” 380

So spake the monarch, and with stern command
Dismissed them; with reluctant steps they passed
Along the margin of the watery waste,
Till to the tents and ships they came, where lay
The warlike Myrmidons. Their chief they found 385
Sitting beside his tent and dark-ribbed ship.
Achilles marked their coming, not well pleased:
With troubled mien, and awe-struck by the King,
They stood, nor dared accost him; but himself

Divined their errand, and addressed them thus: 390

“ Welcome, ye messengers of Gods and men,
Heralds! approach in safety; not with you,
But with Atrides, is my just offence,
Who for the fair Briseis sends you here.
Go, then, Patroclus, bring the maiden forth, 395
And give her to their hands; but witness ye,
Before the blessed Gods and mortal men,
And to the face of that injurious King,
When he shall need my arm, from shameful rout
To save his followers; blinded by his rage, 400
He neither heeds experience of the past,
Nor scans the future, provident how best
To guard his fleet and army from the foe.”

He spoke: obedient to his friend and chief,
Patroclus led the fair Briseis forth, 405
And gave her to their hands; they to the ships
Retraced their steps, and with them the fair girl
Reluctant went: meanwhile Achilles, plunged
In bitter grief, from all the band apart,
Upon the margin of the hoary sea 410
Sat idly gazing on the dark-blue waves;

And to his Goddess-mother long he prayed,
With outstretched hands, "Oh, mother! since thy son
To early death by destiny is doomed,
I might have hoped the Thunderer on high, 415
Olympian Jove, with honour would have crowned
My little space; but now disgrace is mine;
Since Agamemnon, the wide-ruling King,
Hath wrested from me, and still holds, my prize."

Weeping, he spoke; his Goddess-mother heard, 420
Beside her aged father where she sat
In the deep ocean-caves: ascending quick
Through the dark waves, like to a misty cloud,
Beside her son she stood; and as he wept,
She gently touched him with her hand, and said, 425
"Why weeps my son? and whence his cause of grief?
Speak out, that I may hear, and share thy pain."

To whom Achilles, swift of foot, replied,
Groaning, "Thou know'st; what boots to tell thee all?
On Thebes we marched, Eëtion's sacred town, 430
And stormed the walls, and hither bore the spoil.
The spoils were fairly by the sons of Greece
Apportioned out; and to Atrides' share

The beauteous daughter of old Chryses fell.
Chryses, Apollo's priest, to free his child, 435
Came to the encampment of the brass-clad Greeks,
With costly ransom charged; and in his hand
The sacred fillet of his God he bore,
And golden staff; to all he sued, but chief
To Atreus' sons, twin captains of the host. 440
Then through the ranks assenting murmurs ran,
The priest to reverence, and the ransom take:
Not so Atrides; he, with haughty mien
And bitter words, the trembling sire dismissed.
The old man turned in sorrow; but his prayer 445
Phœbus Apollo heard, who loved him well.
Against the Greeks he bent his fatal bow,
And fast the people fell; on every side
Throughout the camp the heavenly arrows flew;
A skilful seer at length the cause revealed 450
Why thus incensed the Archer-God; I then,
The first, gave counsel to appease his wrath.
Whereat Atrides, full of fury, rose,
And uttered threats, which he hath now fulfilled.
For Chryses' daughter to her native land 455

In a swift-sailing ship the keen-eyed Greeks
Have sent, with costly offerings to the God:
But her, assigned me by the sons of Greece,
Brises' fair daughter, from my tent e'en now
The heralds bear away. Then, Goddess, thou, 460
If thou hast power, protect thine injured son.
Fly to Olympus, to the feet of Jove,
And make thy prayer to him, if on his heart
Thou hast in truth, by word or deed, a claim.
For I remember, in my father's house, 465
I oft have heard thee boast, how thou, alone
Of all the Immortals, Saturn's cloud-girt son
Didst shield from foul disgrace, when all the rest,
Juno, and Neptune, and Minerva joined,
With chains to bind him; then, O Goddess, thou 470
Didst set him free, invoking to his aid
Him of the hundred arms, whom Briareus
The immortal Gods, and men Ægeon call.
He, mightier than his father, took his seat
By Saturn's son, in pride of conscious strength: 475
Fear seized on all the Gods, nor did they dare
To bind their King: of this remind him now,

And clasp his knees, and supplicate his aid
For Troy's brave warriors, that the routed Greeks
Back to their ships with slaughter may be driven; 480
That all may taste the folly of their King,
And Agamemnon's haughty self may mourn
The slight on Grecia's bravest warrior cast."

Thus he; and Thetis, weeping, thus replied:
"Alas, my child, that e'er I gave thee birth! 485
Would that beside thy ships thou couldst remain
From grief exempt, and insult! since by fate
Few years are thine, and not a lengthened term;
At once to early death and sorrows doomed
Beyond the lot of man! in evil hour 490
I gave thee birth! But to the snow-clad heights
Of great Olympus, to the throne of Jove,
Who wields the thunder, thy complaints I bear.
Thou by thy ships, meanwhile, against the Greeks
Thine anger nurse, and from the fight abstain. 495
For Jove is to a solemn banquet gone
Beyond the sea, on Æthiopia's shore,
Since yesternight; and with him all the Gods.
On the twelfth day he purposed to return

To high Olympus ; thither then will I, 500
And at his feet my supplication make ;
And he, I think, will not deny my suit."

This said, she disappeared ; and left him there
Musing in anger on the lovely form
Torn from his arms by violence away. 505

Meantime, Ulysses, with his sacred freight,
Arrived at Chrysa's strand ; and when his bark
Had reached the shelter of the deep sea bay,
Their sails they furled, and lowered to the hold ;
Slacked the retaining shrouds, and quickly struck 510
And stowed away the mast ; then with their sweeps
Pulled for the beach, and cast their anchors out,
And made her fast with cables to the shore.
Then on the shingly breakwater themselves
They landed, and the sacred hecatomb 515
To great Apollo ; and Chryseis last.

Her to the altar straight Ulysses led,
The wise in counsel ; in her father's hand
He placed the maiden, and addressed him thus :
" Chryses, from Agameinnon, King of men, 520
To thee I come, thy daughter to restore ;

And to thy God, upon the Greeks' behalf,
To offer sacrifice, if haply so
We may appease his wrath, who now incensed
With grievous suffering visits all our host." 525
Then to her sire he gave her; he with joy
Received his child; the sacred hecatomb
Around the well-built altar for the God
In order due they placed; their hands then washed,
And the salt cake prepared, before them all 530
With hands uplifted Chryses prayed aloud:
 "Hear me, God of the silver bow! whose care
Chrysa surrounds, and Cilla's lovely vale,
Whose sovereign sway o'er Tenedos extends!
Once hast thou heard my prayer, avenged my cause, 535
And poured thy fury on the Grecian host.
Hear yet again, and grant what now I ask;
Withdraw thy chastening hand, and stay the plague."
 Thus as he prayed, his prayer Apollo heard.
Their prayers concluded, and the salt cake strewed 540
Upon the victims' heads, they drew them back,
And slew; and flayed; then cutting from the thighs
The choicest pieces, and in double layers

O'erspreading them with fat, above them placed
The due meat-offerings; then the aged priest 545
The cleft wood kindled, and libations poured
Of ruddy wine; armed with the five-forked prongs
The attendant ministers beside him stood.
The thighs consumed with fire, the inward parts
They tasted first; the rest upon the spits 550
Roasted with care, and from the fire withdrew.
Their labours ended, and the feast prepared,
They shared the social meal, nor lacked there aught.
The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,
The attendant youths the flowing goblets crowned, 555
And in fit order served the cups to all.
All day they sought the favour of the God,
The glorious pæans chanting, and the praise
Of Phœbus: he, well pleased, the strain received.
But when the sun was set, and shades of night 560
O'erspread the sky, upon the sandy beach
Close to their ship they laid them down to rest.
And when the rosy-fingered morn appeared,
Back to the camp they took their homeward way.
A favouring breeze the Far-destroyer sent: 565

They stepped the mast, and spread the snowy sail :
Full in the midst the bellying sail received
The gallant breeze ; and round the vessel's prow
The dark waves loudly roared, as on she rushed
Skimming the seas, and cut her watery way. 570
Arrived where lay the wide-spread host of Greece,
Their dark-ribbed vessel on the beach they drew
High on the sand, and strongly shored her up ;
Then through the camp they took their sev'ral ways.
Meantime, beside the ships Achilles sat, 575
The Heaven-born son of Peleus, swift of foot,
Chafing with rage repressed ; no more he sought
The honoured council, nor the battle-field ;
But wore his soul away, and inly pined
For the fierce joy and tumult of the fight. 580
But when the twelfth revolving day was come,
Back to Olympus' heights the immortal Gods,
Jove at their head, together all returned.
Then Thetis, mindful of her son's request,
Rose from the ocean wave, and sped in haste 585
To high Olympus, and the courts of Heaven.
The all-seeing son of Saturn there she found

Sitting apart upon the topmost crest
Of many-ridged Olympus; at his feet
She sat, and while her left hand clasped his knees, 590
Her right approached his beard, and suppliant thus
She made her prayer to Saturn's royal son:

“Father, if e'er amid the immortal Gods
By word or deed I did thee service true,
Hear now my prayer! Avenge my hapless son, 595
Of mortals shortest-lived, insulted now
By mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
And plundered of his lawful spoils of war.
But Jove, Olympian, Lord of counsel, Thou
Avenge his cause; and give to Trojan arms 600
Such strength and power, that Greeks may learn how much
They need my son, and give him honour due.”

She said: the Cloud-compeller answered not,
But silent sat; then Thetis clasped his knees,
And hung about him, and her suit renewed: 605

“Give me thy promise sure, thy gracious nod,
Or else refuse (for thou hast none to fear),
That I may learn, of all the immortal Gods,
How far I stand the lowest in thine eyes.”

Then, much disturbed, the Cloud-compeller spoke : 610
" Sad work thou mak'st, in bidding me oppose
My will to Juno's, when her bitter words
Assail me ; for full oft amid the Gods
She taunts me, that I aid the Trojan cause.
But thou return, that Juno see thee not, 615
And leave to me the furtherance of thy suit.
Lo, to confirm thy faith, I nod my head ;
And well among the immortal Gods is known
The solemn import of that pledge from me :
For ne'er my promise shall deceive, or fail, 620
Or be recalled, if with a nod confirmed."

He said, and nodded with his shadowy brows ;
Waved on the immortal head the ambrosial locks,
And all Olympus trembled at his nod.
They parted thus ; from bright Olympus' heights 625
The Goddess hasted to her ocean-caves,
Jove to his palace ; at his entrance all
Rose from their seats at once ; not one presumed
To wait his coming, but advanced to meet.
Then on his throne he sat ; but not unmarked 630
Of Juno's eye had been the council held

In secret with the silver-footed Queen,
The daughter of the aged Ocean-God;
And with sharp words she thus addressed her Lord:

“Tell me, deceiver, who was she with whom 635
Thou late held'st council? ever 'tis thy way
Apart from me to weave thy secret schemes,
Nor dost thou freely share with me thy mind.”

To whom the Sire of Gods and men replied:
“Expect not, Juno, all my mind to know; 640
My wife thou art, yet would such knowledge be
Too much for thee; whate'er I deem it fit
That thou shouldst know, nor God nor man shall hear
Before thee; but what I in secret plan,
Seek not to know, nor curiously enquire.” 645

Whom answered thus the stag-eyed Queen of Heaven:
“What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak?
Ne'er have I sought, or now, or heretofore,
Thy secret thoughts to know; what thou think'st fit
To tell, I wait thy gracious will to hear. 650
Yet fear I in my soul thou art beguiled
By wiles of Thetis, silver-footed Queen,
The daughter of the aged Ocean-God;

For she was with thee early, and embraced
Thy knees, and has, I think, thy promise sure, 655
Thou wilt avenge Achilles' cause, and bring
Destructive slaughter on the Grecian host."

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied :
" Presumptuous, to thy busy thoughts thou giv'st
Too free a range, and watchest all I do ; 660
Yet shalt thou not prevail, but rather thus
Be aliened from my heart—the worse for thee !
If this be so, it is my sovereign will.
But, now, keep silence, and my words obey,
Lest all the Immortals fail, if I be wroth, 665
To rescue thee from my resistless hand."

He said, and terror seized the stag-eyed Queen :
Silent she sat, curbing her spirit down,
And all the Gods in pitying sorrow mourned.
Vulcan, the skilled artificer, then first 670
Broke silence, and with soothing words addressed
His mother, Juno, white-armed Queen of Heaven :
" Sad were't, indeed, and grievous to be borne,
If for the sake of mortal men you two
Should suffer angry passions to arise, 675

And kindle broils in Heaven ; so should our feast

By evil influence all its sweetness lack.

Let me advise my mother (and I know

That her own reason will my words approve)

To speak my father fair ; lest he again 680

Reply in anger, and our banquet mar :

For Jove, the lightning's Lord, if such his will,

Might hurl us from our seats (so great his power) ;

But thou address him still with gentle words ;

So shall his favour soon again be ours." 685

This said, he rose, and in his mother's hand

A double goblet placed, as thus he spoke :

" Have patience, mother mine ! though much enforced,

Restrain thy spirit, lest perchance these eyes,

Dear as thou art, behold thee brought to shame ; 690

And I, though grieved in heart, be impotent

To save thee ; for 'tis hard to strive with Jove.

When to thy succour once before I came,

He seized me by the foot, and hurled me down

From Heaven's high threshold ; all the day I fell, 695

And with the setting sun, on Lemnos' isle

Lighted, scarce half alive ; there was I found,

And by the Sintian people kindly nursed."

Thus as he spoke, the white-armed Goddess smiled,
And, smiling, from his hand received the cup. 700
Then to the Immortals all, in order due,
He ministered, and from the flagon poured
The luscious nectar; while among the Gods
Rose laughter irrepressible, at sight
Of Vulcan hobbling round the spacious hall. 705

Thus they till sunset passed the festive hours;
Nor lacked the banquet aught to please the sense,
Nor sound of tuneful lyre, by Phœbus touched,
Nor Muses' voice, who in alternate strains
Responsive sang: but when the sun had set, 710
Each to his home departed, where for each
The crippled Vulcan, matchless architect,
With wondrous skill a noble house had reared.

To his own couch, where he was wont of old,
When overcome by gentle sleep, to rest, 715
Olympian Jove ascended; there he slept,
And, by his side, the golden-thronèd Queen. 717

BOOK II.

ALL night in sleep reposed the other Gods,
And helmèd warriors; but the eyes of Jove
Sweet slumber held not, pondering in his mind
How to avenge Achilles' cause, and pour
Destructive slaughter on the Grecian host. 5
Thus as he mused, the wisest course appeared
By a deluding vision to mislead
The son of Atreus; and with wingèd words
Thus to a phantom form he gave command:
"Hie thee, deluding Vision, to the camp 10
And ships of Greece, to Agamemnon's tent;
There, changing nought, as I command thee speak.
Bid that he arm in haste the long-haired Greeks
To combat; for the wide-built streets of Troy
He now may capture; since the immortal Gods 15
Watch over her no longer; all are gained
By Juno's prayers; and woes impend o'er Troy."

He said: the Vision heard, and straight obeyed:
Swiftly he sped, and reached the Grecian ships,
And sought the son of Atreus; him he found 20
Within his tent, wrapped in ambrosial sleep;
Above his head he stood, like Neleus' son,
Nestor, whom Agamemnon revered most
Of all the Elders; in his likeness clothed
Thus spoke the heavenly Vision; "Sleep'st thou, son 25
Of Atreus, valiant warrior, horseman bold?
To sleep all night but ill becomes a chief,
Charged with the public weal, and cares of state.
Hear now the words I bear; to thee I come
A messenger from Jove, who from on high 30
Looks down on thee with eyes of pitying love.
He bids thee arm in haste the long-haired Greeks
To combat; since the wide-built streets of Troy
Thou now mayst capture; for the immortal Gods
Watch over her no longer; all are gained 35
By Juno's prayers; and woes impend o'er Troy.
Bear this in mind; and when from sleep aroused
Let not my words from thy remembrance fade."
This said, he vanished; and the monarch left,

Inspired with thoughts which ne'er should come to pass. 40

For in that day he vainly hoped to take

The town of Priam; ignorant what Jove

Designed in secret, or what woes, what groans,

What lengthened labours in the stubborn fight,

Were yet for Trojans and for Greeks in store. 45

He woke from sleep; but o'er his senses spread

Dwelt still the heavenly voice; he sat upright;

He donned his vest of texture fine, new-wrought,

Then o'er it threw his ample robe, and bound

His sandals fair around his well-turned feet; 50

And o'er his shoulders flung his sword, adorned

With silver studs; and bearing in his hand

His royal staff, ancestral, to the ships

Where lay the brass-clad warriors, bent his way.

Aurora now was rising up the steep 55

Of great Olympus, to the immortal Gods

Pure light diffusing; when Atrides bade

The clear-voiced heralds to the Assembly call

The general host; they gave the word, and straight

From every quarter thronged the eager crowd. 60

But first, of all the Elders, by the side

Of Nestor's ship, the aged Pylian chief,
A secret conclave Agamemnon called;
And, prudent, thus the chosen few addressed:
"Hear me, my friends! In the still hours of night 65
I saw a heavenly Vision in my sleep:
Most like it seemed in stature, form, and face
To reverend Nestor; at my head it stood,
And with these words addressed me—'Sleep'st thou, son
Of Atreus, valiant warrior, horseman bold? 70
To sleep all night but ill becomes a chief,
Charged with the public weal, and cares of state.
Hear now the words I bear; to thee I come
A messenger from Jove, who from on high
Looks down on thee with eyes of pitying love. 75
He bids thee arm in haste the long-haired Greeks
To combat; since the wide-built streets of Troy
Thou now mayst capture; for the immortal Gods
Watch over her no longer; all are gained
By Juno's prayers, and woes impend o'er Troy. 80
Bear thou my words in mind.' Thus as he spoke
He vanished; and sweet sleep forsook mine eyes.
Seek we then straight to arm the sons of Greece:

But first, as is our wont, myself will prove
The spirit of the army ; and suggest 85
Their homeward voyage ; ye, throughout the camp
Restore their courage, and restrain from flight."

Thus having said, he sat ; and next arose
Nestor, the chief of Pylos' sandy shore,
Who thus with prudent speech replied, and said : 90
" O friends, the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
If any other had this Vision seen,
We should have deemed it false, and laughed to scorn
The idle tale ; but now it hath appeared,
Of all our army, to the foremost man : 95
Seek we then straight to arm the sons of Greece."

He said, and from the council led the way.
Uprose the sceptred monarchs, and obeyed
Their leader's call, and round them thronged the crowd.
As swarms of bees, that pour in ceaseless stream 100
From out the crevice of some hollow rock,
Now clustering, and anon 'mid vernal flowers,
Some here, some there, in busy numbers fly ;
So to the Assembly from their tents and ships
The countless tribes came thronging ; in their midst, 105

By Jove enkindled, Rumour urged them on.
Great was the din; and as the mighty mass
Sat down, the solid earth beneath them groaned;
Nine heralds raised their voices loud, to quell
The storm of tongues, and bade the noisy crowd 110
Be still, and listen to the Heaven-born Kings.
At length they all were seated, and awhile
— Their clamours sank to silence; then uprose
The monarch Agamemnon, in his hand
His royal staff, the work of Vulcan's art; 115
Which Vulcan to the son of Saturn gave;
To Hermes he, the heavenly messenger;
Hermes to Pelops, matchless charioteer;
Pelops to Atreus; Atreus at his death
Bequeathed it to Thyestes, wealthy Lord 120
Of numerous herds; to Agamemnon last
Thyestes left it; token of his sway
— O'er all the Argive coast, and neighbouring isles.
On this the monarch leant, as thus he spoke:
"Friends, Grecian Heroes, Ministers of Mars! 125
Grievous, and all unlooked for, is the blow
Which Jove hath dealt me; by his promise led

I hoped to raze the strong-built walls of Troy,
And home return in safety; but it seems
He falsifies his word, and bids me now 130
Return to Argos, frustrate of my hope,
Dishonoured, and with grievous loss of men.
Such now appears the o'er-ruling sovereign will
Of Saturn's son; who oft hath sunk the heads
Of many a lofty city in the dust, 135
And yet will sink; for mighty is his hand.
'Tis shame indeed that future days should hear
How such a force as ours, so great, so brave,
Hath thus been baffled, fighting, as we do,
'Gainst numbers far inferior to our own, 140
And see no end of all our warlike toil.
For should we choose, on terms of plighted truce,
Trojans and Greeks, to number our array;
Of Trojans, all that dwell within the town,
And we, by tens disposed, to every ten, 145
To crown our cups, one Trojan should assign,
Full many a ten no cupbearer would find:
So far the sons of Greece outnumber all
That dwell within the town; but to their aid

Bold warriors come from all the cities round, 150
Who greatly harass me, and render vain
My hope to storm the strong-built walls of Troy.
Already now nine weary years have passed;
The timbers of our ships are all decayed,
The cordage rotted; in our homes the while 155
Our wives and helpless children sit, in vain
Expecting our return; and still the work,
For which we hither came, remains undone.
Hear then my counsel; let us all agree
Home to direct our course, since here in vain 160
We strive to take the well-built walls of Troy."

Thus as he spoke, the crowd, that had not heard
The secret council, by his words was moved;
So swayed and heaved the multitude, as when
O'er the vast billows of the Icarian sea 165
Eurus and Notus from the clouds of Heaven
Pour forth their fury; or as some deep field
Of wavy corn, when sweeping o'er the plain
The ruffling west wind sways the bending ears;
So was the Assembly stirred; and toward the ships 170
With clamorous joy they rushed; beneath their feet

Rose clouds of dust, while one to other called
To seize the ships and drag them to the main.
They cleared the channels, and with shouts of "home"
That rose to Heaven, they knocked the shores away. 175
Then had the Greeks in shameful flight withdrawn,
Had Juno not to Pallas thus appealed:
"Oh Heaven! brave child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Shall thus the Greeks, in ignominious flight,
O'er the wide sea their homeward course pursue, 180
And as a trophy to the sons of Troy
The Argive Helen leave, on whose account,
Far from their home, so many valiant Greeks
Have cast their lives away? Go quickly thou
Amid the brass-clad Greeks, and man by man 185
Address with words persuasive, nor permit
To launch their well-trimmed vessels on the deep."

She said, nor did Minerva not obey,
But swift descending from Olympus' heights
With rapid flight she reached the Grecian ships. 190
Laertes' son, in council sage as Jove
There found she standing; he no hand had laid
On his dark vessel, for with bitter grief

His heart was filled ; the blue-eyed Maid approached,
And thus addressed him : " Great Laertes' son, 195
Ulysses, sage in council, can it be
That you, the men of Greece, embarking thus
On your swift ships, in ignominious flight,
O'er the wide sea will take your homeward way,
And as a trophy to the sons of Troy 200
The Argive Helen leave, on whose account
Far from their homes so many valiant Greeks
Have cast their lives away ? Go quickly thou
Among the multitude, and man by man
Address with words persuasive, nor permit 205
To launch their well-trimmed vessels on the deep."
She said ; the heavenly voice Ulysses knew ;
Straight, springing to the course, he cast aside,
And to Eurybates of Ithaca,
His herald and attendant, threw his robe ; 210
Then to Atrides hastened, and by him
Armed with his royal staff ancestral, passed
With rapid step amid the ships of Greece.
Each King or leader whom he found he thus
With cheering words encouraged and restrained : 215

"O gallant friend, 'tis not for thee to yield,
Like meaner men, to panic; but thyself
Sit quiet, and the common herd restrain.
Thou know'st not yet Atrides' secret mind:
He tries us now, and may reprove us soon. 220
His words in council reached not all our ears:
See that he work us not some ill; for fierce
His anger; and the Lord of counsel, Jove,
From whom proceeds all honour, loves him well."

But of the common herd whome'er he found 225
Clamouring, he checked with staff and threatening words:
"Good friend, keep still, and hear what others say,
Thy betters far: for thou art good for nought,
Of small account in council or in fight.
All are not sovereigns here; ill fares the state 230
Where many masters rule; let one be Lord,
One King supreme; to whom wise Saturn's son
In token of his sovereign power hath given
The sceptre's sway and ministry of law."

Such were his words, as through the ranks he passed: 235
They from the vessels and the tents again
Thronged to the Assembly, with such rush of sound,

As when the many-dashing ocean's wave
Breaks on the shore, and foams the frothing sea.
The others all were settled in their seats: 240
Only Thersites, with unmeasured words,
Of which he had good store, to rate the chiefs,
Not over-seemly, but wherewith he thought
To move the crowd to laughter, brawled aloud.
The ugliest man was he who came to Troy: 245
With squinting eyes, and one distorted foot,
His shoulders round, and buried in his breast
His narrow head, with scanty growth of hair.
Against Achilles and Ulysses most
His hate was turned; on them his venom poured; 250
Anon, at Agamemnon's self he launched
His loud-tongued ribaldry; 'gainst him he knew
Incensed the public mind; and bawling loud,

Line 253. The text of the original leaves it somewhat in doubt whether the anger of the Greeks were directed against Thersites or Agamemnon. I believe the preponderance of authority, ancient and modern, is in favour of the former interpretation; but the latter is not without the support of some eminent scholars, and after much consideration I have been induced to adopt it. The original represents the Greeks as filled with anger *and resentment* against *some one*. Thersites was an object of general contempt, but he had done nothing to excite those feelings: indeed, apart from the offensiveness of his tone, the public sympathy was with him; for the army

With scurril words, he thus addressed the King :

“ What more, thou son of Atreus, wouldst thou have ? 255

Thy tents are full of brass ; and in those tents

Many fair women, whom, from all the spoil,

We Greeks, whene'er some wealthy town we take,

Choose first of all, and set apart for thee.

Or dost thou thirst for gold, which here perchance 260

Some Trojan brings, the ransom of his son

Captured by me, or by some other Greek ?

Or some new girl, to gratify thy lust,

was deeply dissatisfied, and resented the conduct of Agamemnon towards Achilles, mainly perhaps because they had ceased to be enriched with the plunder of his successful forays (see i. 202, and ix. 387). This dissatisfaction and resentment are referred to by Neptune (xiii. 126), and by Agamemnon himself (xiv. 55). They had lately manifested themselves in the alacrity with which the whole army had caught at the insidious suggestion of abandoning the war ; and, just before the second assembly, Thersites avails himself of the general feeling, constituting himself the representative of a popular grievance, to vent his personal spite against Agamemnon. Ulysses saw how dangerous such a display might be at such a moment ; and artfully assuming (line 281) that the feeling was confined to Thersites alone (though in his subsequent speech, line 335, he admits and excuses the general discontent), he proceeds to cut short its expression by summary chastisement. Thereupon the fickle multitude, “ despite their anger ” (against Agamemnon), cannot refrain from laughing at the signal discomfiture of their self-constituted champion.

This view is very fully set forth in a note on the passage appended to a translation of the Iliad by Mr. Barter, published in 1859, but which I have only seen since the publication of this work.

Kept for thyself apart? a leader, thou
Shouldst not to evil lead the sons of Greece. 265
Ye slaves! ye coward souls! Women of Greece!
I will not call you men! why go we not
Home with our ships, and leave this mighty chief
To gloat upon his treasures, and find out
Whether in truth he need our aid, or no; 270
Who on Achilles, his superior far,
Foul scorn hath cast, and robbed him of his prize,
Which for himself he keeps? Achilles, sure,
Is not intemperate, but mild of mood;
Else, Atreus' son, this insult were thy last." 275
On Agamemnon, leader of the host,
With words like these Thersites poured his hate;
But straight Ulysses at his side appeared,
And spoke, with scornful glance, in stern rebuke:
"Thou babbling fool, Thersites, prompt of speech, 280
Restrain thy tongue, nor singly thus presume
The Kings to slander; thou, the meanest far
Of all that with the Atridæ came to Troy.
Ill it beseems, that such an one as thou
Should lift thy voice against the Kings, and rail 285

With scurril ribaldry, and prate of home.
How these affairs may end, we know not yet;
Nor how, or well or ill, we may return.
Cease then against Atrides, King of men,
To pour thy spite, for that the valiant Greeks 290
To him, despite thy railing, as of right
An ample portion of the spoils assign.
But this I tell thee, and will make it good,
If e'er I find thee play the fool, as now,
Then may these shoulders cease this head to bear, 295
And may my son Telemachus no more
Own me his father, if I strip not off
Thy mantle and thy garments, aye, expose
Thy nakedness, and flog thee to the ships
Howling, and scourged with ignominious stripes." 300
Thus as he spoke, upon Thersites' neck
And back came down his heavy staff; the wretch
Shrank from the blow, and scalding tears let fall.
Where struck the golden-studded staff, appeared
A bloody weal: Thersites quailed, and down, 305
Quivering with pain, he sat, and wiped away,
With horrible grimace, the trickling tears.

The Greeks, despite their anger, laughed aloud,
And one to other said, "Good faith, of all
The many works Ulysses well hath done, 310
Wise in the council, foremost in the fight,
He ne'er hath done a better, than when now
He makes this scurril babbler hold his peace.
Methinks his headstrong spirit will not soon
Lead him again to vilify the Kings." 315

Thus spoke the general voice: but, staff in hand,
Ulysses rose; Minerva by his side,
In likeness of a herald, bade the crowd
Keep silence, that the Greeks, from first to last,
Might hear his words, and ponder his advice. 320
He thus with prudent phrase his speech began:
"Great son of Atreus, on thy name, O King,
Throughout the world will foul reproach be cast,
If Greeks forget their promise, nor make good
The vow they took to thee, when hitherward 325
We sailed from Argos' grassy plains, to raze,
Ere our return, the well-built walls of Troy.
But now, like helpless widows, or like babes,
They mourn their cruel fate, and pine for home.

'Tis hard indeed defeated to return; 330

The seaman murmurs, if from wife and home,

Ev'n for one month, his well-found bark be stayed,

Tossed by the wintry blasts and stormy sea;

But us the ninth revolving year beholds

Still lingering here: I cannot therefore blame 335

Our valiant Greeks, if by the ships I hear

Their murmurs; yet 'twere surely worst of all

Long to remain, and bootless to return.

Bear up, my friends, remain awhile, and see

If Calchas truly prophesy, or no. 340

For this ye all have seen, and can yourselves

Bear witness, all who yet are spared by fate,

Not long ago, when ships of Greece were met

At Aulis, charged with evil freight for Troy,

And we, around a fountain, to the Gods 345

Our altars reared, with faultless hecatombs,

Near a fair plane-tree, where bright water flowed,

Behold a wonder! by Olympian Jove

Sent forth to light, a snake, with burnished scales,

Of aspect fearful, issuing from beneath 350

The altars, glided to the plane-tree straight.

There, on the topmost bough, beneath the leaves
Cowering, a sparrow's callow nestlings lay;
Eight fledglings, and the parent bird the ninth.
All the eight nestlings, uttering piercing cries, 355
The snake devoured; and as the mother flew,
Lamenting o'er her offspring, round and round,
Uncoiling, caught her, shrieking, by the wing.
Then, when the sparrow's nestlings and herself
The snake had swallowed, by the God, who first 360
Sent him to light, a miracle was wrought:
For Jove, the deep-designing Saturn's son,
Turned him to stone; we stood, and wondering gazed.
But when this prodigy befell our rites,
Calchas, inspired of Heaven, took up his speech: 365
'Ye long-haired sons of Greece, why stand ye thus
In mute amaze? to us Olympian Jove,
To whom be endless praise, vouchsafes this sign,
Late sent, of late fulfilment; as ye saw
The snake devour the sparrow and her young, 370
Eight nestlings, and the parent bird the ninth;
So, for so many years, are we condemned
To wage a fruitless war; but in the tenth

The wide-built city shall at last be ours."

Thus he foretold, and now the time is come. 375

Here then, ye well-greaved Greeks, let all remain,

Till Priam's wealthy city be our own."

He said, and loudly cheered the Greeks—and loud

From all the hollow ships came back the cheers—

In admiration of Ulysses' speech. 380

Gerenian Nestor next took up the word:

"Like children, Grecian warriors, ye debate;

Like babes to whom unknown are feats of arms.

Where then are now our solemn covenants,

Our plighted oaths? Go, cast we to the fire 385

Our councils held, our warriors' plans matured,

Our absolute pledges, and our hand-plight given,

In which our trust was placed; since thus in vain

In words we wrangle, and how long soe'er

We here remain, solution none we find. 390

Atrides, thou, as is thy wont, maintain

Unchanged thy counsel; for the stubborn fight

Array the Greeks; and let perdition seize

Those few, those two or three among the host,

Who hold their separate counsel—(not on them 395

Depends the issue!—rather than return
To Argos, ere we prove if Jove indeed
Will falsify his promised word, or no.
For well I ween, that on the day when first
We Grecians hitherward our course addressed, 400
To Troy the messengers of blood and death,
The o'er-ruling son of Saturn, on our right
His lightning flashing, with auspicious sign
Assured us of his favour; let not then
The thoughts of home be breathed, ere Trojan wives 405
Given to our warriors, retribution pay
For wrongs by us, in Helen's cause, sustained.
But who-so longs, if such an one there be,
To make his homeward voyage, let him take
His well-rigged bark, and go; before the rest 410
To meet the doom of death! But thou, O King!
Be well advised thyself, and others lead
By wholesome counsel; for the words I speak
Are not to be despised; by tribes and clans,
O Agamemnon! range thy troops, that so 415
Tribe may to tribe give aid, and clan to clan.
If thus thou do, and Greeks thy words obey,

Then shalt thou see, of chiefs and troops alike,
The good and bad; for on their own behoof
They all shall fight; and if thou fail, shalt know 420
Whether thy failure be of Heaven's decree,
Or man's default and ignorance of war."

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus:
"Father, in council, of the sons of Greece,
None can compare with thee; and would to Jove, 425
To Pallas, and Apollo, at my side
I had but ten such counsellors as thee!
Then soon should royal Priam's city fall,
Tak'n and destroyed by our victorious hands.
But now on me hath ægis-bearing Jove, 430
The son of Saturn, fruitless toil imposed,
And hurtful quarrels; for in wordy war
About a girl, Achilles and myself
Engaged; and I, alas! the strife began:
Could we be friends again, delay were none, 435
How short soe'er, of Ilium's final doom.
But now to breakfast, ere we wage the fight.
Each sharpen well his spear, his shield prepare,
Each to his fiery steeds their forage give,

Each look his chariot o'er, that through the day 440
We may unwearied stem the tide of war;
For respite none, how short soe'er, shall be,
Till night shall bid the storm of battle cease.
With sweat shall reek upon each warrior's breast
The leathern belt beneath the covering shield; 445
And hands shall ache that wield the pond'rous spear:
With sweat shall reek the fiery steeds that draw
Each warrior's car; but whomsoe'er I find
Loitering beside the beakèd ships, for him
"Twere hard to 'scape the vultures and the dogs." 450
He said; and from the applauding ranks of Greece
Rose a loud sound, as when the ocean wave,
Driven by the south wind on some lofty beach,
Dashes against a prominent crag, exposed
To blasts from every storm that roars around. 455
Uprising then, and through the camp dispersed
They took their several ways, and by their tents
The fires they lighted, and the meal prepared;
And each to some one of the immortal Gods
His offering made, that in the coming fight 460
He might escape the bitter doom of death.

But to the o'er-ruling son of Saturn, Jove,
A sturdy ox, well-fattened, five years old,
Atrides slew; and to the banquet called
The aged chiefs and councillors of Greece: 465
Nestor the first, the King Idomeneus,
The two Ajaces next, and Tydeus' son,
Ulysses sixth, as Jove in council sage.
But uninvited Menelâus came,
Knowing what cares upon his brother pressed. 470
Around the ox they stood, and on his head
The salt cake sprinkled; then amid them all
The monarch Agamemnon prayed aloud:
"Most great, most glorious Jove! who dwell'st on high,
In clouds and darkness veiled, grant Thou that ere 475
This sun shall set, and night o'erspread the earth,
I may the haughty walls of Priam's house
Lay prostrate in the dust; and burn with fire
His lofty gates; and strip from Hector's breast
His sword-rent tunic, while around his corpse 480
Many brave comrades, prostrate, bite the dust."
Thus he; but Saturn's son his prayer denied;
Received his offerings, but his toils increased.

Their prayers concluded, and the salt cake strewed
Upon the victim's head, they drew him back, 485
And slew, and flayed; then cutting from the thighs
The choicest pieces, and in double layers
O'erspreading them with fat, above them placed
The due meat-offerings; these they burnt with logs
Of leafless timber; and the inward parts, 490
First to be tasted, o'er the fire they held.
The thighs consumed with fire, the inward parts
They tasted first; the rest upon the spits
Roasted with care, and from the fire withdrew.
Their labours ended, and the feast prepared, 495
They shared the social meal, nor lacked there aught.
The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,
Gerenian Nestor thus his speech began:
"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Great Atreus' son, no longer let us pause, 500
The work delaying which the powers of Heaven
Have trusted to our hands; do thou forthwith
Bid that the heralds proclamation make,
And summon through the camp the brass-clad Greeks;
While, in a body, through the wide-spread ranks 505

We pass, and stimulate their warlike zeal."

He said; and Agamemnon, King of men,
Obedient to his counsel, gave command
That to the war the clear-voiced heralds call
The long-haired Greeks: they gave the word, and straight 510
From every quarter thronged the eager crowd.
The Heaven-born Kings, encircling Atreus' son,
The troops inspected: Pallas, blue-eyed Maid,
Before the chiefs her glorious ægis bore,
By time untouched, immortal: all around 515
A hundred tassels hung, rare works of art,
All gold, each one a hundred oxen's price.
With this the Goddess passed along the ranks,
Exciting all; and fixed in every breast
The firm resolve to wage unwearied war; 520
And dearer to their hearts than thoughts of home
Or wished return, became the battle-field.

As when a wasting fire, on mountain tops,
Hath seized the blazing woods, afar is seen
The glaring light; so, as they moved, to Heaven 525
Flashed the bright glitter of their burnished arms.

As when a numerous flock of birds, or geese,

Or cranes, or long-necked swans, on Asian mead,
Beside Cäyster's stream, now here, now there,
Disporting, ply their wings; then settle down 530
With clamorous noise, that all the mead resounds;
So to Scamander's plain, from tents and ships,
Poured forth the countless tribes; the firm earth groaned
Beneath the tramp of steeds and armed men.
Upon Scamander's flowery mead they stood, 535
Unnumbered as the vernal leaves and flowers.

Or as the multitudinous swarms of flies,
That round the cattle-sheds in spring-tide pour,
While the warm milk is frothing in the pail;
So numberless upon the plain, arrayed 540
For Troy's destruction, stood the long-haired Greeks.
And as experienced goat-herds, when their flocks
Are mingled in the pasture, portion out
Their several charges, so the chiefs arrayed
Their squadrons for the fight; while in the midst 545
The mighty monarch Agamemnon moved:
His eye, and lofty brow, the counterpart
Of Jove, the Lord of thunder; in his girth
Another Mars, with Neptune's ample chest.

As 'mid the thronging heifers in a herd 550
Stands, proudly eminent, the lordly bull;
So, by Jove's will, stood eminent that day,
'Mid many heroes, Atreus' godlike son.

Say now, ye Nine, who on Olympus dwell,
Muses (for ye are Goddesses, and ye 555
Were present, and know all things: we ourselves
But hear from Rumour's voice, and nothing know),
Who were the chiefs and mighty Lords of Greece.
But should I seek the multitude to name,
Not if ten tongues were mine, ten mouths to speak, 560
Voice inexhaustible, and heart of brass,
Should I succeed, unless, Olympian maids,
The progeny of ægis-bearing Jove,
Ye should their names record, who came to Troy.
The chiefs, and all the ships, I now rehearse. 565

Boëtia's troops by Peneleus were led,
And Lëitus, and Prothöenor bold,
Arcesilas and Clonius: they who dwelt
In Hyria, and on Aulis' rocky coast,
Scœnus, and Scolus, and the highland range 570
Of Etëonus; in Thespeia's vale,

Graia, and Mycalessus' wide-spread plains :
And who in Harma and Eilesium dwelt,
And in Erythræ, and in Eleon,
Hyle, and Peteon, and Ocalea, 575
In Copæ, and in Medeon's well-built fort,
Eutresis, Thisbe's dove-frequented woods,
And Coronea, and the grassy meads
Of Haliartus ; and Plataea's plain,
In Glissa, and the foot of Lower Thebes, 580
And in Anchestus, Neptune's sacred grove ;
And who in viny-clustered Arne dwelt,
And in Mideia, and the lovely site
Of Nissa, and Anthedon's utmost bounds.
With these came fifty vessels ; and in each 585
Were six score youths, Bœotia's noblest flower.
Who in Aspledon dwelt, and Minyas' realm
Orchomenus, two sons of Mars obeyed,
Ascalaphus, and bold Ialmenus ;
In Actor's house, the son of Azeus, born 590
Of fair Astyoche, a maiden pure,
Till in the upper chamber, where she slept,
Stout Mars by stealth her virgin bed assailed :

Of these came thirty ships in order due.

By Schedius and Epistrophus, the sons 595

Of great Iphitus, son of Naubolus,

Were led the Phocian forces; these were they

Who dwelt in Cyparissus, and the rock

Of Python, and on Crissa's lovely plain;

And who in Daulis, and in Panope, 600

Anemorea and Hyampolis,

And by Cephisus' sacred waters dwelt,

Or in Lilæa, by Cephisus' springs.

In their command came forty dark-ribbed ships.

These were the leaders of the Phocian bands, 605

And on Bœotia's left their camp was pitched.

Ajax, Oileus' son, the Locrians led;

Swift-footed, less than Ajax Telamon,

Of stature low, with linen breastplate armed:

But skilled to throw the spear o'er all who dwell 610

In Hellas or Achaia: these were they

From Cynos, Opus, and Calliarus,

Bessa, and Scarpha, and Augæa fair,

Tarpha, and Thronium, by Boagrius' stream.

Him from beyond Eubœa's sacred isle, 615

Of Locrians followed forty dark-ribbed ships.

Breathing firm courage high, the Abantian host,

Who from Eubœa and from Chalcis came,

Or who in vine-clad Histiaëa dwelt,

Eretria, and Cerinthus maritime, 620

And who the lofty fort of Dium held,

And in Carystus and in Styra dwelt:

These Elephenor led, true plant of Mars,

Chalcodon's son, the brave Abantian chief.

Him, all conspicuous with their long back hair, 625

The bold Abantians followed; spearmen skilled,

Who through the foemen's breastplates knew full well,

Held in firm grasp, to drive the ashen spear.

In his command came forty dark-ribbed ships.

Those who in Athens' well-built city dwelt, 630

The noble-souled Erectheus' heritage;

Child of the fertile soil, by Pallas reared,

Daughter of Jove, who him in Athens placed

In her own wealthy temple; there with blood

Of bulls and lambs, at each revolving year, 635

The youths of Athens do him sacrifice;

These by Menestheus, Petäus' son, were led.

With him might none of mortal men compare,
In order due of battle to array
Chariots and buckler'd men; Nestor alone 640
Perchance might rival him, his elder far.
In his command came fifty dark-ribbed ships.

Twelve ships from Salamis with Ajax came,
And they beside the Athenian troops were ranged.

Those who from Argos, and the well-walled town 645
Of Tyrins came, and from Hermione,
And Asine, deep-bosom'd in the bay;
And from Troezen and Eione,
And vine-clad Epidaurus; and the youths
Who dwelt in Mases, and Ægina's isle; 650
O'er all of these the valiant Diomed
Held rule; and Sthenelus, the illustrious son
Of far-famed Capaneus; with these, the third,
A godlike warrior came, Euryalus,
Son of Mecistheus, Taläus' royal son. 655
Supreme o'er all was valiant Diomed.
In their command came eighty dark-ribbed ships.

Who in Mycenæ's well-built fortress dwelt,
And wealthy Corinth, and Cleone fair,

Orneia, and divine Aræthure, 660

And Sicyon, where Adrastus reigned of old,

And Gonoessa's promontory steep,

And Hyperesia, and Pellene's rock;

In Ægium, and the scattered towns that lie

Along the beach, and wide-spread Helice; 665

Of these a hundred ships obeyed the rule

Of mighty Agamemnon, Atreus' son.

The largest and the bravest host was his;

And he himself, in dazzling armour clad,

O'er all the heroes proudly eminent, 670

Went forth exulting in his high estate,

Lord of the largest host, and chief of chiefs.

Those who in Lacedæmon's lowland plains,

And who in Sparta and in Phare dwelt,

And who on Messa's dove-frequented cliffs, 675

Bryseia, and Ægæa's lovely vale,

And in Amyclæ, and the sea-bathed fort

Of Helos, Cetylus and Laas dwelt,

His valiant brother Menelæus led,

With sixty ships; but ranged apart they lay. 680

Their chief, himself in martial ardour bold,

Inspiring others, filled with fierce desire
The rape of Helen and his wrongs to avenge.

They who in Pylos and Arene dwelt,
And Thryum, by the ford of Alpheus' stream, 685
In Cyparissus and Amphigene,
Pteleon, and lofty Æpus' well-built fort,
Helos, and Dorium, where the Muses met,
And put to silence Thracian Thamyris,
As from Cechalia, from the royal house 690
Of Eurytus he came; he, over-bold,
Boasted himself pre-eminent in song,
Ev'n though the daughters of Olympian Jove,
The Muses, were his rivals: they in wrath
Him of his sight at once and power of song 695
Amerced, and bade his hand forget the lyre.
These by Gerenian Nestor all were led,
In fourscore ships and ten in order due.

They of Arcadia, and the realm that lies
Beneath Cyllene's mountain high, around 700
The tomb of Æpytus, a warrior race;
The men of Pheneus and Orchomenus
In flocks abounding; who in Ripa dwelt,

In Stratia, and Enispe's breezy height,
Or Tegea held, and sweet Mantinea, 705
Stymphalus and Parrhasia; these were led
By Agapenor brave, Anchæus' son,
In sixty ships; in each a num'rous crew
Of stout Arcadian youths, to war inured.
The ships, wherewith they crossed the dark-blue sea, 710
Were given by Agamemnon, King of men,
The son of Atreus; for the Arcadian youth
Had ne'er to maritime pursuits been trained.

Who in Buprasium and in Elis dwelt,
Far as Hyrmine, and the extremest bounds 715
Of Myrsinus; and all the realm that lies
Between Aleisium and the Olenian rock;
These by four chiefs were led; and ten swift ships,
By bold Epeians manned, each chief obeyed.
Amphimachus and Thalpius were the first, 720
Sons of two brothers, Cteatus the one,
The other Eurytus, to Actor born;
Next Amarynceus' son, Diores bold;
The fourth Polyxenus, the godlike son
Of Angeas' royal heir, Agasthenes. 725

They of Dulichium, and the sacred isles,
The Echinades, which face, from o'er the sea,
The coast of Elis, were by Meges led,
The son of Phyleus, dear to Jove, in arms
Valiant as Mars; who, with his sire at feud, 730
Had left his home, and to Dulichium come:
In his command were forty dark-ribbed ships.

Those who from warlike Cephalonia came,
And Ithaca, and leafy Neritus,
And Crocyleium; rugged Ægilips, 735
And Samos, and Zacynthus, and the coast
Of the mainland with its opposing isles;
These in twelve ships, with scarlet-painted bows,
Ulysses led, in council sage as Jove.

Thoas, Andræmon's son, the Ætolians led; 740
From Pleuron, and Pylone, Olenus,
Chalcis-by-sea, and rocky Calydon:
The race of Æneus was no more; himself,
And fair-hair'd Meleager, both were dead:
Whence all Ætolia's rule on him was laid. 745
In his command came forty dark-ribbed ships.

The King Idomeneus the Cretans led,

From Cnossus, and Gortyna's well-walled town,
Miletus, and Lycastus' white-stone cliffs,
Lyctus, and Phæstus, Rhytium, and the rest 750
Whom Crete from all her hundred cities sent:
'These all Idomeneus, a spearman skilled,
Their King, commanded; and Meriones,
In battle terrible as blood-stained Mars.
In their command came fourscore dark-ribbed ships. 755
 Valiant and tall, the son of Hercules,
Tlepolemus, nine vessels brought from Rhodes,
By gallant Rhodians manned, who tripartite
Were settled, and in Ialyssus dwelt,
In Lindus, and Cameirus' white-stone hills. 760
These all renowned Tlepolemus obeyed,
Who to the might of Hercules was born
Of fair Astyoche; his captive she,
When many a goodly town his arms had razed,
Was brought from Ephyra, by Selles' stream. 765
Reared in the royal house, Tlepolemus,
In early youth, his father's uncle slew,
A warrior once, but now in life's decline,
Lycimnius; then in haste a fleet he built,

Mustered a numerous host; and fled, by sea, 770

The threatened vengeance of the other sons

And grandsons of the might of Hercules.

Long wanderings past, and toils and perils borne,

To Rhodes he came; his followers, by their tribes,

Three districts formed; and so divided, dwelt, 775

Beloved of Jove, the King of Gods and men,

Who showered upon them boundless store of wealth.

Nireus three well-trimmed ships from Syme brought;

Nireus, to Charops whom Aglaia bore;

Nireus, the goodliest man of all the Greeks, 780

Who came to Troy, save Peleus' matchless son:

But scant his fame, and few the troops he led.

Who in Nisyrus dwelt, and Carpathus,

And Cos, the fortress of Eurypylus,

And in the Casian and Calydnian Isles, 785

Were by Phidippus led, and Antiplus,

Two sons of Thessalus, Alcides' son;

With them came thirty ships in order due.

Next those who in Pelasgian Argos dwelt,

And who in Aloë, and in Alope, 790

Trachys, and Phthia, and in Hellas famed

For women fair; of these, by various names,
Achaïans, Myrmidons, Hellenes, known,
In fifty ships, Achilles was the chief.
But from the battle-strife these all abstained, 795
Since none there was to marshal their array.
For Peleus' godlike son, the swift of foot,
Lay idly in his tent, the loss resenting
Of Brises' fair-haired daughter; whom himself
Had chosen, prize of all his warlike toil, 800
When he Lyrnessus and the walls of Thebes
O'erthrew, and Mynes and Epistrophus
Struck down, bold warriors both, Evenus' sons,
Selepius' royal heir; for her in wrath,
He held aloof, but soon again to appear. 805

Those in the flowery plain of Pyrrhasus,
To Ceres dear, who dwelt; in Phylace,
In Iton, rich in flocks, and, by the sea,
In Antron, and in Pteleon's grass-clad meads;
These led Protesiläus, famed in arms, 810
While yet he lived; now laid beneath the sod.
In Phylace were left his weeping wife,
And half-built house; him, springing to the shore,
First of the Greeks, a Dardan warrior slew.

Nor were his troops, their leader though they mourned, 815
Left leaderless; the post of high command
Podarces claimed of right, true plant of Mars,
Iphiclus' son, the rich Phylacides;
The brother of Protesilæus he,
Younger in years, nor equal in renown; 820
Yet of a chief no want the forces felt,
Though much they mourned their valiant leader slain.
In his command came forty dark-ribbed ships.

Those who from Pheræ came, beside the lake
Bœbeis, and who dwelt in Glaphyræ, 825
In Bœbe, and Iolcos' well-built fort,
These in eleven ships Eumelus led,
Whom Pelias' daughter, fairest of her race,
Divine Alcestis to Admetus bore.

Who in Methone and Thaumacia dwelt, 830
In Melibœa and Olizon's rock;
These Philoctetes, skilful archer, led.
Seven ships were theirs, and every ship was manned
By fifty rowers, skilful archers all.
But he, their chief, was lying, racked with pain, 835
On Lemnos' sacred isle; there left perforce
In torture from a venomous serpent's wound:

There he in anguish lay ; nor long, ere Greeks
Of royal Philoctetes felt their need.
Yet were his troops, their leader though they mourned, 840
Not leaderless : Oileus' bastard son,
Medon, of Rhene born, their ranks arrayed.

Who in Æchalia, Eurytus' domain,
In Tricca, and in rough Ithome dwelt,
These Podalirius and Machaon led, 845
Two skilful leeches, Æsculapius' sons.
Of these came thirty ships in order due.

Who in Ormenium and Asterium dwelt,
By Hypereia's fount, and on the heights
Of Titanum's white peaks, of these was chief 850
Eurypylus, Euæmon's gallant son ;
In his command came forty dark-ribbed ships.

Who in Argissa and Gyrtona dwelt,
Ortha, Elone, and the white-walled town
Of Oloösson, Polypætes led ; 855
Son of Pirithōus, progeny of Jove,
A warrior bold ; Hippodamia fair
Him to Pirithōus bore, what time he slew
The shaggy Centaurs, and from Pelion's heights
For refuge 'mid the rude Æthices drove. 860

Nor he alone ; with him to Troy there came
A scion true of Mars, Leonteus, heir
Of nobly-born Coronus, Cæneus' son.
In their command came forty dark-ribbed ships.

With two and twenty vessels Gouneus came 865
From Cythus ; he the Enienes led,
And the Peræbians' warlike tribes, and those
Who dwelt around Dodona's wintry heights,
Or tilled the soil upon the lovely banks
Of Titaresius, who to Peneus pours 870
The tribute of his clearly-flowing stream ;
Yet mingles not with Peneus' silver waves,
But on the surface floats like oil, his source
From Styx deriving, in whose awful name
Both Gods and men by holiest oaths are bound. 875

Magnesia's troops, who dwelt by Peneus' stream,
Or beneath Pelion's leafy-quivering shades,
Swift-footed Prothōus led, Tenthredon's son :
In his command came forty dark-ribbed ships.

These were the leaders and the chiefs of Greece : 880
Say, Muse, of these, who with the Atridæ came,
Horses and men, who claimed the highest praise.
Of steeds, the bravest and the noblest far

Were those Eumelus drove, Admetus' son :
Both swift as birds, in age and colour matched, 885
Alike in height, as measured o'er the back ;
Both mares, by Phœbus of the silver bow
Reared in Pieria, thunderbolts of war.
Of men, while yet Achilles held his wrath,
The mightiest far was Ajax Telamon ; 890
For with Achilles, and the steeds that bore
The matchless son of Peleus, none might vie :
But 'mid his beakèd ocean-going ships
He lay, with Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
Indignant; while his troops upon the beach 895
With quoits and javelins whiled away the day,
And feats of archery; their steeds the while
The lotus-grass and marsh-grown parsley cropped,
Each standing near their car; the well-wrought cars
Lay all unheeded in the warriors' tents; 900
They, inly pining for their godlike chief,
Roamed listless up and down, nor joined the fray.
Such was the host, which, like devouring fire,
O'erspread the land; the earth beneath them groaned :
As when the Lord of thunder, in his wrath, 905
The earth's foundations shakes, in Arimi,

Where, buried deep, 'tis said, Typhoeus lies ;
So at their coming, groaned beneath their feet
The earth, as quickly o'er the plain they spread.

To Troy, sent down by ægis-bearing Jove, 910

With direful tidings storm-swift Iris came.

At Priam's gate, in solemn conclave met,

Were gathered all the Trojans, young and old :

Swift Iris stood amidst them, and, the voice

Assuming of Polites, Priam's son, 915

The Trojan scout, who, trusting to his speed,

Was posted on the summit of the mound

Of ancient *Æsuetes*, there to watch

Till from their ships the Grecian troops should march ;

His voice assuming, thus the Goddess spoke : 920

“Old man, as erst in peace, so still thou lov'st

The strife of words ; but fearful war is nigh.

Full many a host in line of battle ranged

My eyes have seen ; but such a force as this,

So mighty and so vast, I ne'er beheld : 925

In number as the leaves, or as the sand,

Against the city o'er the plain they come.

Then, Hector, for to thee I chiefly speak,

This do ; thou know'st how various our allies,

Of different nations and discordant tongues: 930

Let each then those command o'er whom he reigns,

And his own countrymen in arms array."

She said; and Hector knew the voice divine,

And all, dissolved the council, flew to arms.

The gates were opened wide; forth poured the crowd, 935

Both foot and horse; and loud the tumult rose.

Before the city stands a lofty mound,

In the mid plain, by open space enclosed;

Men call it Batiaea; but the Gods

The tomb of swift Myrinna; mustered there 940

The Trojans and Allies their troops arrayed.

The mighty Hector of the glancing helm,

The son of Priam, led the Trojan host:

The largest and the bravest band were they,

Bold spearmen all, who followed him in arms. 945

Anchises' valiant son, Æneas, led

The Dardans; him, 'mid Ida's jutting peaks,

Immortal Venus to Anchises bore,

A Goddess yielding to a mortal's love:

With him, well skilled in war, Archilochus 950

And Acamas, Antenor's gallant sons.

Who in Zeleia dwelt, at Ida's foot,

The godlike presence of Ascanius brought
The Phrygians, dauntless in the standing fight. 1000

From Lydia came Pylæmenes' two sons,
Born of the lake Gygeian; Antiphus,
And Mesthles; these Mæonia's forces led,
Who dwelt around the foot of Tmolus' hill.

In charge of Nastes came the Carian troops, 1005
Of barbarous speech; who in Miletus dwelt,
And in the dense entangled forest shade
Of Phthira's hill, and on the lofty ridge
Of Mycale, and by Mæander's stream;
These came with Nastes and Amphimacus; 1010
Amphimacus and Nastes, Nomion's sons;
With childish folly to the war he came,
Laden with store of gold; yet nought availed
His gold to save him from the doom of death;
Slain by the son of Peleus in the stream; 1015
And all his wealth Achilles bore away.

Sarpedon last, and valiant Glaucus led
The Lycian bands, from distant Lycia's shore,
Beside the banks of Xanthus' eddying stream. 1019

BOOK III.

WHEN by their several chiefs the troops were ranged,
With noise and clamour, as a flight of birds,
The men of Troy advanced; as when the cranes,
Flying the wintry storms, send forth on high
Their dissonant clamours, while o'er the ocean stream 5
They steer their course, and on their pinions bear
Battle and death to the Pygmæan race.

On the other side the Greeks in silence moved,
Breathing firm courage, bent on mutual aid.
As when the south wind o'er the mountain tops 10
Spreads a thick veil of mist, the shepherd's bane,
And friendly to the nightly thief alone,
That a stone's throw the range of vision bounds;
So rose the dust-cloud, as in serried ranks
With rapid step they moved across the plain. 15
But when the opposing forces near were met,
A panther's skin across his shoulders flung,

Armed with his bow and sword, in front of all
Advanced the godlike Paris; in his hand
He poised two brass-tipped javelins, and defied 20
To mortal combat all the chiefs of Greece.

Him when the warlike Meneläus saw
With haughty strides advancing from the crowd;
As when a lion, hunger-pinched, espies
Some mighty beast of chase, or antlered stag, 25
Or mountain goat, and with exulting spring
Strikes down his prey, and on the carcase feeds,
Unscared by baying hounds and eager youths:
So Meneläus saw with fierce delight
The godlike Paris; for he deemed that now 30
His vengeance was at hand; and from his car,
Armed as he was, he leaped upon the plain.
But when the godlike Paris saw him spring
Defiant from the ranks, with quailing heart,
Back to his comrades' sheltering crowd he sprang, 35
In fear of death; as when some traveller spies,
Coiled in his path upon the mountain side,
A deadly snake, back he recoils in haste,
His limbs all trembling, and his cheek all pale;

So back recoiled, in fear of Atreus' son, 40
The godlike Paris 'mid the Trojan host.

To whom in stern rebuke thus Hector spoke :
" Thou wretched Paris, though in form so fair,
Thou slave of woman, manhood's counterfeit !
Would thou hadst ne'er been born, or died at least 45
Unwedded ; so 'twere better far for all,
Than thus to live a scandal and reproach.
Well may the long-haired Greeks triumphant boast,
Who think thee, from thine outward show, a chief
Among our warriors ; but thou hast in truth 50
Nor strength of mind, nor courage in the fight.
How was't that such as thou could e'er induce
A noble band, in ocean-going ships
To cross the main, with men of other lands
Mixing in amity, and bearing thence 55
A woman, fair of face, by marriage ties
Bound to a race of warriors ; to thy sire,
Thy state, thy people, cause of endless grief,
Of triumph to thy foes, contempt to thee !
Durst thou the warlike Meneläus meet, 60
Thou to thy cost shouldst learn the might of him

Whose bride thou didst not fear to bear away :
Then shouldst thou find of small avail thy lyre,
Or Venus' gifts of beauty and of grace,
Or, trampled in the dust, thy flowing hair. 65
But too forbearing are the men of Troy ;
Else for the ills that thou hast wrought the state,
Ere now thy body had in stone been cased."

To whom the godlike Paris thus replied :
" Hector, I needs must own thy censure just, 70
Nor without cause ; thy dauntless courage knows
Nor pause nor weariness ; but as an axe,
That in a strong man's hand, who fashions out
Some naval timber, with unbated edge
Cleaves the firm wood, and aids the striker's force ; 75
Ev'n so unwearied is thy warlike soul.
Yet blame not me for golden Venus' gifts :
The gifts of Heaven are not to be despised,
Which Heaven may give, but man could not command.
But if thou wilt that I should dare the fight, 80
Bid that the Trojans and the Grecians all
Be seated on the ground ; and in the midst
The warlike Meneläus and myself

Stand front to front, for Helen and the spoils
Of war to combat ; and whoe'er shall prove 85
The better man in conflict, let him bear
The woman and the spoils in triumph home ;
While ye, the rest, in peace and friendship sworn,
Shall still possess the fertile plains of Troy ;
And to their native Argos they return, 90
For noble steeds and lovely women famed."

He said, and Hector joyed to hear his words :
Forth in the midst he stepped, and with his spear
Grasped by the middle, stayed the Trojan ranks.
At him the long-haired Grecians bent their bows, 95
Prompt to assail with arrows and with stones ;
But loud the monarch Agamemnon's voice
Was heard ; " Hold, Argives, hold ! ye sons of Greece,
Shoot not ! for Hector of the glancing helm
Hath, as it seems, some message to impart." 100

He said ; they held their hands, and silent stood
Expectant, till to both thus Hector spoke :
" Hear now, ye Trojans, and ye well-greaved Greeks,
The words of Paris, cause of all this war.
He asks through me that all the host of Troy 105

And Grecian warriors shall upon the ground
Lay down their glittering arms; while in the midst
The warlike Meneläus and himself
Stand front to front, for Helen and the spoils
Of war to combat; and whoe'er shall prove 110
The better man in conflict, let him bear
The woman and the spoils in triumph home,
While we, the rest, firm peace and friendship swear."

Thus Hector spoke; the rest in silence heard;
But Meneläus, bold in fight, replied: 115
"Hear now my answer; in this quarrel I
May claim the chiefest share; and now I hope
Trojans and Greeks may see the final close
Of all the labours ye so long have borne
To avenge my wrong, at Paris' hand sustained. 120
And of us two whiche'er is doomed to death,
So let him die! the rest, depart in peace.
Bring then two lambs, one white, the other black,
For Tellus and for Sol; we on our part
Will bring another, for Saturnian Jove: 125
And let the majesty of Priam too
Appear, himself to consecrate our oaths,

(For reckless are his sons, and void of faith,)
That none Jove's oath may dare to violate.
For young men's spirits are too quickly stirred; 130
But in the councils checked by reverend age,
Alike are weighed the future and the past,
And for all interests due provision made."

He said, and Greeks and Trojans gladly heard,
In hopes of respite from the weary war. 135
They ranged the cars in ranks; and they themselves
Descending doffed their arms, and laid them down
Close each by each, with narrow space between.
Two heralds to the city Hector sent
To bring the lambs, and aged Priam call; 140
While Agamemnon to the hollow ships,
Their lamb to bring, in haste Talthybius sent:
He heard, and straight the monarch's voice obeyed.

Meantime to white-armed Helen Iris sped,
The heavenly messenger: in form she seemed 145
Her husband's sister, whom Antenor's son
The valiant Helicaon had to wife,
Laodice, of Priam's daughters all
Loveliest of face: she in her chamber found

Her whom she sought: a mighty web she wove, 150

Of double woof and brilliant hues; whereon

Was interwoven many a toilsome strife

Of Trojan warriors and of brass-clad Greeks,

For her encountered at the hand of Mars.

Beside her Iris stood, and thus she spoke: 155

“Come, sister dear, and see the glorious deeds

Of Trojan warriors and of brass-clad Greeks.

They who erewhile, impatient for the fight,

Rolled o'er the plain the woful tide of war,

Now silent sit, the storm of battle hushed, 160

Reclining on their shields, their lances bright

Beside them reared; while Paris in the midst,

And warlike Meneläus, stand prepared

With the long spear for thee to fight; thyself

The prize of conquest and the victor's wife.” 165

Thus as she spoke, in Helen's breast arose

Fond recollection of her former Lord,

Her home, and parents; o'er her head she threw

A snowy veil; and shedding tender tears

She issued forth, not unaccompanied; 170

For with her went fair Æthra, Pittheus' child,

And stag-eyed Clymene, her maidens twain.

They quickly at the Scæan gate arrived.

Attending there on aged Priam, sat

The Elders of the city; Panthōus, 175

And Lampus, and Thymætēs; Clytius,

Bold Icetäon, and Ucalegon,

With sage Antenor, wise in council both:

All these were gathered at the Scæan gate;

By age exempt from war, but in discourse 180

Abundant, as the cricket, that on high

From topmost boughs of forest tree sends forth

His delicate music; so on Ilium's towers

Sat the sage chiefs and councillors of Troy.

Helen they saw, as to the tower she came; 185

And, " 'tis no marvel," one to other said,

"The valiant Trojans and the well-greaved Greeks

For beauty such as this should long endure

The toils of war; for goddess-like she seems;

And yet, despite her beauty, let her go, 190

Nor bring on us and on our sons a curse."

Thus they; but aged Priam Helen called:

"Come here, my child, and sitting by my side,

From whence thou canst discern thy former Lord,
His kindred, and thy friends (not thee I blame, 195
But to the Gods I owe this woful war),
Tell me the name of yonder mighty chief
Among the Greeks a warrior brave and strong:
Others in height surpass him; but my eyes
A form so noble never yet beheld, 200
Nor so august; he moves, a King indeed!"

To whom in answer, Helen, heav'nly fair:
"With reverence, dearest father, and with shame
I look on thee: oh would that I had died
That day when hither with thy son I came, 205
And left my husband, friends, and darling child,
And all the loved companions of my youth:
That I died not, with grief I pine away.
But to thy question: I will tell thee true;
Yon chief is Agamemnon, Atreus' son, 210
Wide-reigning, mighty monarch, ruler good,
And valiant warrior; in my husband's name,
Lost as I am, I called him brother once."

She spoke: the old man admiring gazed, and cried,
"Oh blessed Atrides, child of happy fate, 215

Favoured of Heaven! how many noble Greeks
Obey thy rule! In vine-clad Phrygia once
I saw the hosts of Phrygian warriors wheel
Their rapid steeds; and with them, all the bands
Of Otreus, and of Mygdon, godlike King, 220
Who lay encamped beside Sangarius' stream:
I too with them was numbered, in the day
When met them in the field the Amazons,
The woman-warriors; but their forces all
Reached not the number of the keen-eyed Greeks." 225

Ulysses next the old man saw, and asked,
" Tell me again, dear child, who this may be,
In stature less than Atreus' royal son,
But broader-shouldered, and of ampler chest.
His arms are laid upon the fertile plain, 230
But he himself is moving through the ranks,
Inspecting, like a full-fleeced ram, that moves
Majestic through a flock of snow-white ewes."

To whom Jove's offspring, Helen, thus replied:
" The wise Ulysses that, Laertes' son: 235
Though bred in rugged Ithaca, yet versed
In every stratagem, and deep device."

“O woman,” then the sage Antenor said,
“Of these thy words I can the truth avouch;
For hither when on thine account to treat, 240
Brave Meneläus and Ulysses came,
I lodged them in my house, and loved them both,
And studied well the form and mind of each.
As they with Trojans mixed in social guise,
When both were standing, o’er his comrade high 245
With broad-set shoulders Meneläus stood;
Seated, Ulysses was the nobler form:
Then, in the great Assembly, when to all
Their public speech and argument they framed,
In fluent language Meneläus spoke, 250
In words though few, yet clear; though young in years,
No wordy babbler, wasteful of his speech:
But when the skilled Ulysses rose to speak,
With down-cast visage would he stand, his eyes
Bent on the ground; the staff he bore, nor back 255
He waved, nor forward, but like one untaught,
He held it motionless; who only saw
Would say that he was mad, or void of sense:
But when his chest its deep-toned voice sent forth,

With words that fell like flakes of wintry snow, 260

No mortal with Ulysses could compare :

Then little recked we of his outward show."

At sight of Ajax next the old man enquired ;

"Who is yon other warrior, brave and strong,

Towering o'er all with head and shoulders broad?" 265

To whom, in answer, Helen, heav'nly fair :

"Gigantic Ajax that, the prop of Greece ;

And by his side Idomeneus of Crete

Stands godlike, circled round by Cretan chiefs.

The warlike Meneläus welcomed him 270

Oft in our palace, when from Crete he came.

Now all the other keen-eyed Greeks I see,

Whom once I knew, and now could call by name ;

But two I miss, two captains of the host,

My own two brethren, and my mother's sons, 275

Castor and Pollux ; Castor, charioteer

Unrivalled, Pollux, matchless pugilist.

In Lacedæmon have they stayed behind ?

Or can it be, in ocean-going ships

That they have come indeed, but shun to join 280

The fight of warriors, fearful of the shame,

And deep disgrace that on my name attend?"

Thus she; but they beneath the teeming earth
In Lacedæmon lay, their native land.

Meanwhile the heralds through the city bore 285

The treaty offerings to the Gods; the lambs,

And genial wine, the produce of the soil,

In goat-skin flasks: therewith a flagon bright,

And cups of gold, Idæus brought, and stood

Beside the aged King, as thus he spoke: 290

"Son of Laomedon, arise! the chiefs

Of Trojan warriors and of brass-clad Greeks

Call for thy presence on the battle-plain

To swear a truce; where Paris in the midst

And warlike Menelæus stand prepared 295

With the long spear for Helen and the spoils

Of war to combat, that whoe'er may prove

The better man in fight, may bear away

The woman and the spoils in triumph home;

While we, the rest, in peace and friendship sworn, 300

Shall still possess the fertile plains of Troy;

And to their native Argos they return,

For noble steeds and lovely women famed."

He said; the old man shuddered at his words:
But to his comrades gave command forthwith 305
To yoke his car; and they his word obeyed.
Priam, ascending, gathered up the reins,
And with Antenor by his side, the twain
Drove through the Scæan gate their flying steeds.
But when between the opposing ranks they came, 310
Alighting from the car, they moved on foot
Between the Trojan and the Grecian hosts.
Uprose then Agamemnon, King of men,
Uprose the sage Ulysses; to the front
The heralds brought the off'rings to the Gods, 315
And in the flagon mixed the wine, and poured
The hallowing water on the monarchs' hands.
His dagger then the son of Atreus drew,
Suspended, as was wont, beside the hilt
Of his great sword; and from the victim's head 320
He cut the sacred lock, which to the chiefs
Of Troy and Greece the heralds portioned out.
Then with uplifted hands he prayed aloud:
"O Father Jove! who rul'st from Ida's height,
Most great! most glorious! and thou Sun, who see'st 325

And hearest all things! Rivers! and thou Earth!
And ye, who after death beneath the earth
Your vengeance wreak on souls of men forsworn,
Be witness ye, and this our covenant guard.
If Meneläus fall by Paris' hand, 330
Let him retain both Helen and the spoil,
While in our ships we take our homeward way;
If Paris be by Meneläus slain,
Troy shall surrender Helen and the spoil,
With compensation due to Greece, that so 335
A record may to future days remain.
But, Paris slain, if Priam and his sons
The promised compensation shall withhold,
Then here, my rights in battle to assert,
Will I remain, till I the end achieve." 340

Thus as he spoke, across the victims' throats
He drew the pitiless blade, and on the ground
He laid them gasping, as the stream of life
Poured forth, their vigour by the blade subdued.
Then, from the flagon drawn, from out the cups 345
The wine they poured; and to the eternal Gods
They prayed; and thus from Trojans and from Greeks

Arose the joint petition; "Grant, O Jove!
Most great! most glorious! grant, ye heavenly powers,
That whosoe'er this solemn truce shall break, 350
Ev'n as this wine we pour, their hearts' best blood,
Theirs and their children's, on the earth be poured,
And strangers in subjection take their wives!"

Thus they; but Jove, unyielding, heard their prayer.
The rites performed, then aged Priam spoke: 355
"Hear me, ye Trojans, and ye well-greaved Greeks!
To Ilium's breezy heights I now withdraw,
For that mine eyes will not endure the sight
Of warlike Menelæus and my son
Engaged in deadly combat; of the two 360
Which may be doomed to death, is only known
To Jove, and to the immortal powers of Heaven."

Thus spoke the godlike King; and on the car
He placed the consecrated lambs; himself
Ascending then, he gathered up the reins, 365
And with Antenor by his side, the twain
To Ilium's walls retraced their homeward way.

Then Hector, son of Priam, measured out,
With sage Ulysses joined, the allotted space;

Next, in the brass-bound helmet cast the lots, 370
Which of the two the first should throw the spear.
The crowd, with hands uplifted, to the Gods,
Trojans and Greeks alike, addressed their prayer:
"O Father Jove! who rul'st from Ida's height,
Most great! most glorious! grant that whosoe'er 375
On both our armies hath this turmoil brought
May undergo the doom of death, and we,
The rest, firm peace and lasting friendship swear."

Thus they; great Hector of the glancing helm,
With eyes averted, shook the casque; and forth 380
Was cast the lot of Paris; on the ground
The rest lay down by ranks, where near to each
Were ranged his active steeds, and glittering arms.
Then o'er his shoulders fair-haired Helen's Lord,
The godlike Paris, donned his armour bright: 385
First on his legs the well-wrought greaves he fixed,
Fastened with silver clasps; his ample chest
A breastplate guarded, by Lycaon lent,
His brother, but which fitted well his form.
Around his shoulders slung, his sword he bore, 390
Brass-bladed, silver-studded; then his shield

Weighty and strong ; and on his firm-set head
A helm he wore, well-wrought, with horsehair plume
That nodded, fearful, o'er his brow ; his hand
Grasped the firm spear, familiar to his hold. 395
Prepared alike the adverse warrior stood.

They, from the crowd apart their armour donned,
Came forth ; and each, with eyes of mutual hate,
Regarded each : admiring wonder seized
The Trojan warriors and the well-greaved Greeks, 400
As in the centre of the measured ground
They stood opposed, and poised their quivering spears.
First Paris threw his weighty spear, and struck
Fair in the midst Atrides' buckler round,
But broke not through ; upon the stubborn targe 405
Was bent the lance's point ; then thus to Jove,
His weapon hurling, Meneläus prayed :
"Great King, on him who wrought me causeless wrong,
On Paris, grant that retribution due
My arm may bring ; that men in days to come 410
May fear their host to injure, and repay
With treacherous wile his hospitable cares."

He said, and poisoning, hurled his weighty spear :

Full in the midst it struck the buckler round ;
Right through the buckler passed the sturdy spear, 415
And through the gorgeous breastplate, and within
Cut through the linen vest ; but Paris, back
Inclining, stooped, and shunned the doom of death.

Atrides then his silver-studded sword
Rearing on high, a mighty blow let fall 420
On Paris' helm ; but shivering in his hand
In countless fragments flew the faithless blade.
Then thus to Jove, with eyes uplift to Heaven,
Atrides made his moan : " O Father Jove !
Of all the Gods, the most unfriendly thou ! 425
On Paris' head I hoped for all his crimes
To wreak my vengeance due ; but in my grasp
My faithless sword is shattered, and my spear
Hath bootless left my hand, nor reached my foe."
Then onward rushing, by the horsehair plume 430
He seized his foeman's helm, and wrenching round
Dragged by main force amid the well-greaved Greeks.
The broidered strap, that, passed beneath his beard,
The helmet held, the warrior's throat compressed :
Then had Atrides dragged him from the field, 435

And endless fame acquired; but Venus, child
Of Jove, her favourite's peril quickly saw,
And broke the throttling strap of tough bull's-hide.
In the broad hand the empty helm remained.
The trophy, by their champion whirled amid 440
The well-greaved Greeks, his eager comrades seized;
While he, infuriate, rushed with murderous aim
On Priam's son; but him, the Queen of Love
(As Gods can only) from the field conveyed,
Wrapt in a misty cloud; and on a couch, 445
Sweet perfumes breathing, gently laid him down;
Then went in search of Helen; her she found,
Circled with Trojan dames, on Ilium's tower:
Her by her airy robe the Goddess held,
And in the likeness of an aged dame 450
Who oft for her, in Sparta when she dwelt,
Many a fair fleece had wrought, and loved her well,
Addressed her thus: "Come, Helen, to thy house;
Come, Paris calls thee; in his chamber he
Expects thee, resting on luxurious couch, 455
In costly garb, with manly beauty graced:
Not from the fight of warriors wouldst thou deem

He late had come, but for the dance prepared,
Or resting from the dance's pleasing toil."

She said, and Helen's spirit within her moved; 460
And when she saw the Goddess' beauteous neck,
Her lovely bosom, and her glowing eyes,
She gazed in wonder, and addressed her thus:
"Oh why, great Goddess, make me thus thy sport?
Seek'st thou to bear me far away from hence 465
To some fair Phrygian or Mæonian town,
If there some mortal have thy favour gained?
Or, for that Menelæus in the field
Hath vanquished Paris, and is willing yet
That I, his bane, should to his home return, 470
Here art thou found, to weave again thy wiles?
Go then thyself! thy godship abdicate!
Renounce Olympus! lavish here on him
Thy pity and thy care! he may perchance
Make thee his wife—at least his paramour! 475
But thither go not I! foul shame it were
Again to share his bed; the dames of Troy
Will for a byword hold me; and e'en now
My soul with endless sorrow is possessed."

To whom in anger heavenly Venus spoke: 480
"Incense me not, poor fool! lest I in wrath
Desert thee quite, and as I heretofore
Have loved, so make thee object of my hate;
And kindle, 'twixt the Trojans and the Greeks,
Such bitter feuds, as both shall wreak on thee." 485

She said; and trembled Helen, child of Jove:
She rose in silence; in a snow-white veil
All glittering, shrouded; by the Goddess led
She passed, unnoticed by the Trojan dames.
But when to Paris' splendid house they came, 490
Thronging around her, her attendants gave
Their duteous service; through the lofty hall
With queenly grace the godlike woman passed.
A seat the laughter-loving Goddess placed
By Paris' side; there Helen sat, the child 495
Of ægis-bearing Jove, with downcast eyes,
Yet with sharp words she thus addressed her Lord:
"Back from the battle? would thou there hadst died
Beneath a warrior's arm, whom once I called
My husband! vainly didst thou boast erewhile 500
Thine arm, thy dauntless courage, and thy spear

The warlike Meneläus should subdue!
Go now again, and challenge to the fight
The warlike Meneläus. Be thou ware!
I warn thee, pause, ere madly thou presume 505
With fair-haired Meneläus to contend!
Soon shouldst thou fall beneath his conquering spear."

To whom thus Paris: "Wring not thus my soul
With keen reproaches: now, with Pallas' aid,
Hath Meneläus conquered; but my day 510
Will come: I too can boast my guardian Gods.
But turn we now to love, and love's delights;
For never did thy beauty so inflame
My sense; not when from Lacedæmon first
I bore thee in my ocean-going ships, 515
And revelled in thy love on Cranaë's isle,
As now it fills my soul with fond desire."

He said, and led her to the nuptial couch;
Her Lord she followed; and while there reclined
Upon the richly-inlaid couch they lay, 520
Atrides, like a lion baffled, rushed
Amid the crowd, if haply he might find
The godlike Paris; but not one of all

The Trojans and their brave allies could aid
The warlike Meneläus in his search : 525
Not that, for love, would any one that knew
Have screened him from his anger, for they all
Abhorred him as the shade of death : then thus
Outspoke great Agamemnon, King of men :
“Hear me, ye Trojans, Dardans, and Allies ! 530
With warlike Meneläus rests, 'tis plain,
The prize of victory : then surrender ye
The Argive Helen and the spoils of war,
With compensation due to Greece, that so
A record may to future days remain.” 535
Thus he ; the Greeks, assenting, cheered his words. 536

BOOK IV.

— ON golden pavement, round the board of Jove,
The Gods were gathered; Hebe in the midst
Poured the sweet nectar; they, in golden cups,
Each other pledged, as down they looked on Troy.
— Then Jove, with cutting words and taunting tone, 5
Began the wrath of Juno to provoke:
“ Two Goddesses for Meneläus fight,
Thou, Juno, Queen of Argos, and with thee
Minerva, shield of warriors; but ye two
Sitting aloof, well-pleased it seems, look on; 10
While laughter-loving Venus, at the side
Of Paris standing, still averts his fate,
And rescues, when, as now, expecting death.
To warlike Meneläus we decree,
Of right, the victory; but consult we now 15
What may the issue be; if we shall light
Again the flame of war and discord fierce,

Or the two sides in peace and friendship join.
For me, if thus your general voice incline,
Let Priam's city stand, and Helen back 20
To warlike Meneläus be restored."

So spoke the God ; but seated side by side,
Juno and Pallas glances interchanged
Of ill portent for Troy ; Pallas indeed
Sat silent ; and, though inly wroth with Jove, 25
Yet answered not a word ; but Juno's breast
Could not contain her rage, and thus she spoke :
" What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak ?
How wouldst thou render vain, and void of fruit,
My weary labour and my horses' toil, 30
To stir the people, and on Priam's self,
And Priam's offspring, bring disastrous fate ?
Do as thou wilt ! yet not with our consent."

To whom, in wrath, the Cloud-compeller thus :
" Revengeful ! how have Priam and his sons 35
So deeply injured thee, that thus thou seek'st
With unabated anger to pursue,
Till thou o'erthrow, the strong-built walls of Troy ?
Couldst thou but force the gates, and entering in

On Priam's mangled flesh, and Priam's sons,
And Trojans all, a bloody banquet make,
Perchance thy fury might at length be stayed.
But have thy will, lest this in future times
'Twixt me and thee be cause of strife renewed.
Yet hear my words, and ponder what I say: 45
If e'er, in times to come, my will should be
Some city to destroy, inhabited
By men beloved of thee, seek not to turn
My wrath aside, but yield, as I do now,
Consenting, but with heart that ill consents; 50
For of all cities fair, beneath the sun
And starry Heaven, the abode of mortal men,
None to my soul was dear as sacred Troy,
And Priam's self, and Priam's warrior race.
For with drink-offerings due, and fat of lambs, 55
My altar still hath at their hands been fed;
Such honour hath to us been ever paid."

To whom the stag-eyed Juno thus replied:
" Three cities are there, dearest to my heart;
Argos, and Sparta, and the ample streets 60
Of rich Mycenæ; work on them thy will;

Destroy them, if thine anger they incur ;
I will not interpose, nor hinder thee ;
Mourn them I shall ; reluctant see their fall,
But not resist ; for sovereign is thy will. 65
Yet should my labours not be fruitless all ;
For I too am a God ; my blood is thine ;
Worthy of honour, as the eldest born
Of deep-designing Saturn, and thy wife ;
Thine, who o'er all the Immortals reign'st supreme. 70
But yield we each to other, I to thee,
And thou to me ; the other Gods will all
By us be ruled. On Pallas then enjoin
That to the battle-field of Greece and Troy
She haste, and so contrive that Trojans first 75
May break the treaty, and the Greeks assail."

She said : the Sire of Gods and men complied,
And thus with wingèd words to Pallas spoke :
"Go to the battle-field of Greece and Troy
In haste, and so contrive that Trojans first 80
May break the treaty, and the Greeks assail."

His words fresh impulse gave to Pallas' zeal,
And from Olympus' heights in haste she sped ;

Like to a meteor, that, of grave portent
To warring armies or sea-faring men, 85
The son of deep-designing Saturn sends,
Bright-flashing, scattering fiery sparks around,
The blue-eyed Goddess darted down to earth,
And lighted in the midst; amazement held
The Trojan warriors and the well-greaved Greeks; 90
And one to other looked and said, "What means
This sign? Must fearful battle rage again,
Or may we hope for gentle peace from Jove,
Who to mankind dispenses peace and war?"
Such was the converse Greeks and Trojans held. 95
Pallas meanwhile, amid the Trojan host,
Clad in the likeness of Antenor's son,
Läodocus, a spearman stout and brave,
Searched here and there, if haply she might find
The godlike Pandarus; Lycaon's son 100
She found, of noble birth and stalwart form,
Standing, encircled by his sturdy band
Of bucklered followers from Æsepus' stream.
She stood beside him, and addressed him thus:
"Wilt thou by me be ruled, Lycaon's son? 105

For durst thou but at Meneläus shoot
Thy wingèd arrow, great would be thy fame,
And great thy favour with the men of Troy,
And most of all with Paris; at his hand
Thou shalt receive rich guerdon, when he hears 110
That warlike Meneläus, by thy shaft
Subdued, is laid upon the fun'ral pyre.
Bend then thy bow at Atreus' glorious son,
Vowing to Phœbus, Lycia's guardian God,
The Archer-King, to pay of firstling lambs 115
An ample hecatomb, when home returned
In safety to Zeleia's sacred town."
Thus she; and, fool, he listened to her words.
Straight he uncased his polished bow, his spoil
Won from a mountain ibex, which himself, 120
In ambush lurking, through the breast had shot,
True to his aim, as from behind a crag
He came in sight; prone on the rock he fell;
With horns of sixteen palms his head was crowned;
These deftly wrought a skilful workman's hand, 125
And polished smooth, and tipped the ends with gold.
He bent, and resting on the ground his bow,

Strung it anew; his faithful comrades held
Their shields before him, lest the sons of Greece
Should make their onset ere his shaft could reach 130
The warlike Meneläus, Atreus' son.

His quiver then withdrawing from its case,
With care a shaft he chose, ne'er shot before,
Well-feathered, messenger of pangs and death;
The stinging arrow fitted to the string, 135
And vowed to Phœbus, Lycia's guardian God,
The Archer-King, to pay of firstling lambs
An ample hecatomb, when home returned
In safety to Zeleia's sacred town.

At once the sinew and the notch he drew; 140
The sinew to his breast, and to the bow
The iron head; then, when the mighty bow
Was to a circle strained, sharp rang the horn,
And loud the sinew twanged, as toward the crowd
With deadly speed the eager arrow sprang. 145

Nor, Meneläus, was thy safety then
Uncared for of the Gods; Jove's daughter first,
Pallas, before thee stood, and turned aside
The pointed arrow; turned it so aside

As when a mother from her infant's cheek, 150
Wrapt in sweet slumbers, brushes off a fly;
Its course she so directed that it struck
Just where the golden clasps the belt restrained,
And where the breastplate, doubled, checked its force.
On the close-fitting belt the arrow struck; 155
Right through the belt of curious workmanship
It drove, and through the breastplate richly wrought,
And through the coat of mail he wore beneath,
His inmost guard and best defence to check
The hostile weapons' force; yet onward still 160
The arrow drove, and grazed the hero's flesh.
Forth issued from the wound the crimson blood.
As when some Carian or Mæonian maid,
With crimson dye the ivory stains, designed
To be the cheek-piece of a warrior's steed, 165
By many a valiant horseman coveted,
As in the house it lies, a monarch's boast,
The horse adorning, and the horseman's pride:
So, Menelæus, then thy graceful thighs,
And knees, and ancles, with thy blood were dyed. 170
Great Agamemnon shuddered as he saw

The crimson drops out-welling from the wound ;
Shuddered the warlike Menelāus' self ;
But when not buried in his flesh he saw
The barb and sinew, back his spirit came. 175

Then deeply groaning, Agamemnon spoke,
As Menelāus by the hand he held,
And with him groaned his comrades : " Brother dear,
I wrought thy death when late, on compact sworn,
I sent thee forth alone for Greece to fight ; 180

Wounded by Trojans, who their plighted faith
Have trodden under foot ; but not in vain
Are solemn covenants and the blood of lambs,
The treaty wine outpoured, and hand-plight given,
Wherein men place their trust ; if not at once, 185
Yet soon or late doth Jove assert their claim ;
And heavy penalties the perjured pay
With their own blood, their children's, and their wives'.

So in my inmost soul full well I know
The day shall come when this imperial Troy, 190
And Priam's race, and Priam's royal self,
Shall in one common ruin be o'erthrown ;
And Saturn's son himself, high-thronèd Jove,

Who dwells in Heaven, shall in their faces flash
His ægis dark and dread, this treacherous deed 195
Avenging; this shall surely come to pass.
But, Menelæus, deep will be my grief,
If thou shouldst perish, meeting thus thy fate.
To thirsty Argos should I then return
By foul disgrace o'erwhelmed; for, with thy fall, 200
The Greeks will mind them of their native land;
And as a trophy to the sons of Troy
The Argive Helen leave; thy bones meanwhile
Shall moulder here beneath a foreign soil,
Thy work undone; and with insulting scorn 205
Some vaunting Trojan, leaping on the tomb
Of noble Menelæus, thus shall say:
'On all his foes may Agamemnon so
His wrath accomplish, who hath hither led
Of Greeks a mighty army, all in vain; 210
And bootless home with empty ships hath gone,
And valiant Menelæus left behind:'
Thus when men speak, gape, earth, and hide my shame."
To whom the fair-haired Menelæus thus
With cheering words: "Fear not thyself, nor cause 215

The troops to fear; the arrow hath not touched
A vital part; the sparkling belt hath first
Turned it aside, the doublet next beneath,
And coat of mail, the work of armourer's hands."

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus: 220

"Dear Menelāus, may thy words be true!
The leech shall tend thy wound, and spread it o'er
With healing ointments to assuage the pain."

He said, and to the sacred herald called:

"Haste thee, Talthybius! summon with all speed 225

The son of Æsculapius, peerless leech,
Machaon; bid him hither haste to see
The warlike Menelāus, chief of Greeks,
Who by an arrow from some practised hand,
Trojan or Lycian, hath received a wound; 230
A cause of boast to them, to us of grief."

He said; nor did the herald not obey,

But through the brass-clad ranks of Greece he passed,
In search of brave Machaon; him he found
Standing, by bucklered warriors bold begirt, 235
Who followed him from Trica's grassy plains.
He stood beside him, and addressed him thus:

“ Up, son of Æsculapius ! Atreus' son,
The mighty monarch, summons thee to see
The warlike Menelāus, chief of Greeks, 240
Who by an arrow from some practised hand,
Trojan or Lycian, hath received a wound ;
A cause of boast to them, to us of grief.”

Thus he ; and not unmoved Machaon heard :
They through the crowd, and through the wide-spread host, 245
Together took their way ; but when they came
Where fair-haired Menelāus, wounded, stood,
Around him in a ring the best of Greece,
And in the midst the godlike chief himself,
From the close-fitting belt the shaft he drew, 250
Breaking the pointed barbs ; the sparkling belt
He loosened, and the doublet underneath,
And coat of mail, the work of armourer's hand.
But when the wound appeared in sight, where struck
The stinging arrow, from the clotted blood 255
He cleansed it, and applied with skilful hand
The herbs of healing power, which Chiron erst
In friendly guise upon his sire bestowed.

While round the valiant Menelāus they

Were thus engaged, advanced the Trojan hosts: 260

They donned their arms, and for the fight prepared.

In Agamemnon then no trace was seen

Of laggard sloth, no shrinking from the fight,

But full of ardour to the field he rushed.

He left his horses and brass-mounted car 265

(The champing horses by Eurymedon,

The son of Ptolemy, Peiræus' son,

Were held aloof), but with repeated charge

Still to be near at hand, when faint with toil

His limbs should fail him marshalling his host. 270

Himself on foot the warrior ranks arrayed ;

With cheering words addressing whom he found

With zeal preparing for the battle-field :

" Relax not, valiant friends, your warlike toil ;

For Jove to falsehood ne'er will give his aid ; 275

And they who first, regardless of their oaths,

Have broken truce, shall with their flesh themselves

The vultures feed, while we, their city razed,

Their wives and helpless children bear away."

But whom remiss and shrinking from the war 280

He found, with keen rebuke he thus assailed :

“ Ye wretched Greeks, your country's foul reproach,
Have ye no sense of shame? Why stand ye thus
Like timid fawns, that in the chase run down,
Stand all bewildered, spiritless and tame? 285
So stand ye now, nor dare to face the fight.
What! will ye wait the Trojans' near approach,
Where on the beach, beside the hoary deep,
Our goodly ships are drawn, and see if Jove
Will o'er you his protecting hand extend? ” 290

As thus the King the serried ranks reviewed,
He came where thronging round their skilful chief
Idomeneus, the warlike bands of Crete
Were arming for the fight; Idomeneus,
Of courage stubborn as the forest boar, 295
The foremost ranks arrayed; Meriones
The rearmost squadrons had in charge; with joy
The monarch Agamemnon saw, and thus
With accents bland Idomeneus addressed :

“ Idomeneus, above all other Greeks, 300
In battle and elsewhere, I honour thee;
And in the banquet, where the noblest mix
The ruddy wine for chiefs alone reserved,

Though others drink their share, yet by thy side
Thy cup, like mine, still new replenished stands 305
To drink at pleasure. Up then to the fight,
And show thyself the warrior that thou art."

To whom the Cretan King, Idomeneus :
" In me, Atrides, thou shalt ever find,
As at the first I promised, comrade true ; 310
But go, and stir the other long-haired Greeks
To speedy battle ; since the Trojans now
The truce have broken ; and defeat and death
Must wait on those who have their oaths forsworn."

He said, and Agamemnon went his way 315
Rejoicing ; through the crowd he passed, and came
Where stood the Ajaces ; them, in act to arm,
Amid a cloud of infantry he found ;
And as a goat-herd from his watch-tower crag
Beholds a cloud advancing o'er the sea, 320
By Zephyr's breath impelled ; as from afar
He gazes, black as pitch, it sweeps along
O'er the dark ocean's face, and with it brings
A hurricane of rain ; he, shuddering, sees.
And drives his flock beneath the sheltering cave ; 325

So thick and dark, about the Ajaces stirred,
Impatient for the war, the stalwart youths,
Black masses, bristling close with spear and shield.

Well pleased, the monarch Agamemnon saw,
And thus addressed them: "Valiant chiefs, to you, 330
The leaders of the brass-clad Greeks, I give
(Twere needless and unseemly) no commands;
For well ye understand your troops to rouse
To deeds of dauntless courage; would to Jove,
To Pallas and Apollo, that such mind 335
As is in you, in all the camp were found;
Then soon should Priam's lofty city fall,
Tak'n and destroyed by our victorious hands."

Thus saying, them he left, and onward moved.
Nestor, the smooth-tongued Pylian chief, he found 340
The troops arraying, and to valiant deeds
His friends encouraging; stout Pelagon,
Alastor, Chromius, Hæmon, warlike Prince,
And Bias bold, his people's sure defence.
In the front rank, with chariot and with horse, 345
He placed the car-borne warriors; in the rear,
Numerous and brave, a cloud of infantry,

Compactly massed, to stem the tide of war.
Between the two he placed the inferior troops,
That e'en against their will they needs must fight. 350
The horsemen first he charged, and bade them keep
Their horses well in hand, nor wildly rush
Amid the tumult: "See," he said, "that none,
In skill or valour over-confident,
Advance before his comrades, nor alone 355
Retire; for so your lines were easier forced;
But ranging each beside a hostile car,
Thrust with your spears; for such the better way;
By men so disciplined, in elder days
Were lofty walls and fenced towns destroyed." 360
Thus he, experienced in the wars of old;
Well pleased, the monarch Agamemnon saw,
And thus addressed him: "Would to Heaven, old man,
That, as thy spirit, such too were thy strength
And vigour of thy limbs; but now old age, 365
The common lot of mortals, weighs thee down;
Would I could see some others in thy place,
And thou couldst still be numbered with the young!"
To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:

" Atrides, I too fain would see restored 370

The strength I once possessed, what time I slew

The godlike Ereuthalion; but the Gods

On man bestow not all their gifts at once;

I then was young, and now am bowed with age,

Yet with the chariots can I still go forth, 375

And aid with sage advice: for such the right

And privilege of age; to hurl the spear

Belongs to younger men, who after me

Were born, who boast their vigour unimpaired."

He said; and Agamemnon went his way, 380

Rejoicing: to Menestheus next he came,

The son of Petëus, charioteer renowned;

Him found he, circled by the Athenian bands,

The raisers of the war-cry; close beside

The sage Ulysses stood, around him ranged, 385

Not unrenowned, the Cephalonian troops:

The sound of battle had not reached their ears;

For but of late the Greek and Trojan hosts

Were set in motion; they expecting stood,

Till other Grecian columns should advance, 390

Assail the Trojans, and renew the war.

Atrides saw, and thus, reproachful, spoke :
" O son of Petäus, Heaven-descended King !
And thou too, master of all tricky arts,
Why, lingering, stand ye thus aloof, and wait 395
For others coming? ye should be the first
The hot assault of battle to confront ;
For ye are first my summons to receive,
Whene'er the honoured banquet we prepare :
And well ye like to eat the savoury meat, 400
And, at your will, the luscious wine-cups drain :
Now stand ye here, and unconcerned would see
Ten columns pass before you to the fight."
To whom, with stern regard, Ulysses thus :
" What words have passed the barrier of thy lips, 405
Atrides? how with want of warlike zeal
Canst thou reproach us? when the Greeks again
The furious war shall waken, thou shalt see
(If that thou care to see) amid the ranks
Of Troy, the father of Telemachus 410
In the fore-front: thy words are empty wind."
Atrides saw him chafed, and smiling, thus
Recalled his former words: " Ulysses sage,

Laertes' high-born son, not over-much
I give thee blame, or orders; for I know 415
Thy mind to gentle counsels is inclined;
Thy thoughts are one with mine; then come, henceforth
Shall all be well; and if a hasty word
Have passed, may Heaven regard it as unsaid."
Thus saying, them he left, and onward moved. 420
The son of Tydeus, valiant Diomed,
Standing he found amid his warlike steeds
And well-built cars; beside him, Sthenelus,
The son of Capaneus; Atrides saw,
And thus addressed him with reproachful words: 425
"Alas! thou son of Tydeus, wise and bold,
Why crouch with fear? why thus appalled survey
The pass of war? not so had Tydeus crouched;
His hand was ever ready from their foes
To guard his comrades; so, at least, they say 430
Whose eyes beheld his labours; I myself
Nor met him e'er, nor saw; but, by report,
Thy father was the foremost man of men.
A stranger to Mycenæ once he came,
With godlike Polynices; not at war, 435

But seeking succour for the troops that lay
Encamped before the sacred walls of Thebes;
For reinforcements earnestly they sued;
The boon they asked was granted them, but Jove
With unpropitious omens turned them back. 440
Advancing on their journey, when they reached
Asopus' grassy banks and rushes deep,
The Greeks upon a mission Tydeus sent:
He went; and many Thebans there he found
Feasting in Eteocles' royal hall: 445
Amid them all, a stranger and alone,
He stood unterrified, and challenged all
To wrestle with him, and with ease o'erthrew:
So mighty was the aid that Pallas gave.
Whereat indignant, they, on his return, 450
An ambush set, of fifty chosen youths;
Two were their leaders; Hæmon's godlike son,
Mæon, and Lycophontes, warrior brave,
Son of Autophonus; and these too fared
But ill at Tydeus' hand; he slew them all: 455
Mæon alone, obedient to the Gods,
He spared, and bade him bear the tidings home.

Such Tydeus was: though greater in debate,
His son will never rival him in arms."

He said: brave Diomed in silence heard, 460
Submissive to the monarch's stern rebuke;
Then answered thus the son of Capaneus:
"Atrides, speak not falsely: well thou know'st
The truth, that we our fathers far surpass.
The seven-gated city, Thebes, we took, 465
With smaller force beneath the wall of Mars,
Trusting to heavenly signs, and favouring Jove,
Where they by blind, presumptuous folly failed;
Then equal not our fathers' deeds with ours."

To whom thus Diomed, with stern regard: 470
"Father, be silent; hearken to my words:
I blame not Agamemnon, King of men,
Who thus to battle stirs the well-greaved Greeks:
His will the glory be if we o'ercome
The valiant Trojans, and their city take; 475
Great too his loss, if they o'er us prevail:
Then come, let us too for the fight prepare."

He said; and from the car leaped down in arms:
Fierce rang the armour on the warrior's breast,

That e'en the stoutest heart might quail with fear. 480

As by the west wind driven, the ocean waves
Dash forward on the far-resounding shore,
Wave upon wave; first curls the ruffled sea
With whitening crests; anon with thundering roar
It breaks upon the beach, and from the crags 485
Recoiling flings in giant curves its head
Aloft, and tosses high the wild sea-spray:
Column on column, so the hosts of Greece
Poured, ceaseless, to the war; to each the chiefs
Their orders gave; the rest in silence moved: 490
Scarce might ye deem that mighty mass endued
With power of speech, so silently they moved
In awe of their great captains: far around
Flashed the bright armour they were girt withal.

On the other hand, the Trojans, as the flocks 495
That in the court-yard of some wealthy Lord
In countless numbers stand, at milking-time,
Incessant bleating, as their lambs they hear;
So rose their mingled clamours through the camp;
For not one language nor one speech was there, 500
But many nations called from distant lands:

These Mars inspired, and those the blue-eyed Maid;
And Fear, and Flight, and Discord unappeased,
Of blood-stained Mars the sister and the friend:
With humble crest at first, anon her head, 505
While yet she treads the earth, affronts the skies.
The gage of battle in the midst she threw,
Strode through the crowd, and woe to mortals wrought.
When to the midst they came, together rushed
Bucklers and lances, and the furious might 510
Of mail-clad warriors; bossy shield on shield
Clattered in conflict; loud the clamour rose.
Then rose too mingled shouts and groans of men
Slaying and slain; the earth ran red with blood.
As when, descending from the mountain's brow, 515
Two wintry torrents, from their copious source
Pour downward to the narrow pass, where meet
Their mingled waters in some deep ravine,
Their weight of flood; on the far mountain's side
The shepherd hears the roar; so loud arose 520
The shouts and yells of those commingling hosts.

First 'mid the foremost ranks Antilochus
A Trojan warrior, Echepolus, slew,

A crested chief, Thalesius' noble son.

Beneath his horsehair-plumèd helmet's peak 525

The sharp spear struck; deep in his forehead fixed

It pierced the bone; then darkness veiled his eyes,

And, like a tower, amid the press he fell.

Him Elephenor, brave Abantian chief,

Son of Chalcodon, seizing by the feet, 530

Dragged from beneath the darts, in haste to strip

His armour off; but short-lived was the attempt;

For bold Agenor marked him as he drew

The corpse aside, and with his brass-tipped spear

Thrust through his flank, unguarded, as he stooped, 535

Beside his shield; and slacked his limbs in death.

The spirit was fled; but hotly o'er him raged

The war of Greeks and Trojans; fierce as wolves

They fought, man struggling hand to hand with man.

Then Ajax Telamon a stalwart youth, 540

Son of Anthemion, Simöisius, slew;

Whose mother gave him birth on Simöis' banks,

When with her parents down from Ida's heights

She drove her flock; thence Simöisius named:

Not destined he his parents to repay 545

Their early care; for short his term of life,
By godlike Ajax' mighty spear subdued.
Him, to the front advancing, in the breast,
By the right nipple, Ajax struck; right through,
From front to back, the brass-tipped spear was driven, 550
Out through the shoulder; prone in dust he fell:
As some tall poplar, grown in marshy mead,
Smooth-stemmed, with branches tapering toward the head;
Which with the biting axe the wheelwright fells,
To bend the felloes of his well-built car; 555
Sapless, beside the river, lies the tree;
So lay the youthful Simöisius, felled
By godlike Ajax' hand. At him, in turn,
The son of Priam, Antiphus, encased
In radiant armour, from amid the crowd 560
His javelin threw; his mark, indeed, he missed;
But through the groin Ulysses' faithful friend,
Leucus, he struck, in act to bear away
The youthful dead; down on the corpse he fell,
And, dying, of the dead relaxed his grasp. 565
Fierce anger, at his comrade's slaughter, filled
Ulysses' breast; in burnished armour clad

Forward he rushed; and standing near, around
He looked, and poised on high his glittering lance:
Beneath his aim the Trojans back recoiled; 570
Nor vainly flew the spear; Democöon,
A bastard son of Priam, met the blow:
He from Abydos came, his high-bred mares
There left to pasture; him Ulysses, filled
With fury at his loved companion's death, 575
Smote on the head; through either temple passed
The pointed spear, and darkness veiled his eyes.
Thundering he fell, and loud his armour rang.
At this the Trojan chiefs, and Hector's self,
'Gan to give ground: the Greeks with joyful shouts 580
Seized on the dead, and forward urged their course.
From Ilium's heights Apollo, filled with wrath,
Looked down, and to the Trojans shouted loud:
"Uprouse ye, valiant Trojans! give not way
Before the Greeks; their bodies are not stone, 585
Nor iron, to defy your trenchant swords;
And great Achilles, fair-haired Thetis' son,
Fights not, but o'er his anger broods apart."
So from the city called the heavenly voice;

The Greeks, meanwhile, all-glorious Pallas fired, 590
Moved 'mid the tumult, and the laggards roused.

Then fell Diores, Amarynceus' son:

A rugged fragment of a rock had crushed
His ancle and right leg; from Ænon came
The Thracian chief who hurled it, Peirōus, son 595
Of Imbrassus; the tendons both, and bones,
The huge mass shattered; backward in the dust
He fell, both hands extending to his friends,
Gasping his life away; then quick up-ran
He who the blow had dealt, and with his spear 600
Thrust through him, by the navel; from the wound
His bowels gushed, and darkness veiled his eyes.

But he, advancing, through the breast was struck
Above the nipple, by th' Ætolian chief,
Thoas; and through his lungs the spear was driven. 605
Thoas approached, and from his breast withdrew
The sturdy spear, and with his sharp-edged sword
Across his waistband gave the mortal stroke:
Yet could not touch his arms; for all around
The Thracian warriors, with their tufted crowns, 610
Their long spears held before them, him, though stout,

And strong, and valiant, kept at bay; perforce
He yielded; and thus side by side were laid
The two, the Thracian and th' Epeian chief;
And round them many a valiant soldier lay. 615

Well might the deeds achieved that day deserve
His praise, who through that bloody field might pass
By sword or spear unwounded, by the hand
Of Pallas guarded from the weapon's flight;
For many a Trojan, many a Greek, that day
Prone in the dust, and side by side, were laid. 621

BOOK V.

SUCH strength and courage then to Diomed,
The son of Tydeus, Pallas gave, as raised,
'Mid all the Greeks, the glory of his name.
Forth from his helm and shield a fiery light
There flashed, like autumn's star, that brightest shines 5
When newly risen from his ocean bath.
So from the warrior's head and shoulders flashed
That fiery light, as to the midst he urged
His furious course, where densest masses fought.
There was one Dares 'mid the Trojan host, 10
The priest of Vulcan, rich, of blameless life;
Two gallant sons he had, Idæus named,
And Phegeus, skilled in all the points of war.
These, parted from the throng, the warrior met;
They on their car, while he on foot advanced. 15
When near they came, first Phegeus threw his spear;
O'er the left shoulder of Tydides passed

The erring weapon's point, and missed its mark.
His ponderous spear in turn Tydides threw,
And not in vain; on Phegeus' breast it struck, 20
Full in the midst, and hurled him from the car.
Idæus from the well-wrought chariot sprang,
And fled, nor durst his brother's corpse defend.
Nor had he so escaped the doom of death,
But Vulcan bore him safely from the field, 25
In darkness shrouded, that his aged sire
Might not be wholly of his sons bereaved.
The car Tydides to his comrades gave,
And bade them to the ships the horses drive.
Now when the Trojans Dares' sons beheld, 30
The one in flight, the other stretched in death,
Their spirits within them quailed; but Pallas took
The hand of Mars, and thus addressed the God:
" Mars, Mars, thou bane of mortals, blood-stained Lord,
Razer of cities, wherefore leave we not 35
The Greeks and Trojans to contend, and see
To which the sire of all will victory give;
While we retire, and shun the wrath of Jove?"
Thus saying, from the battle Mars she led,

And placed him on Scamander's steepy banks. 40

The Greeks drove back the Trojan host; the chiefs
Slew each his victim; Agamemnon first,
The mighty monarch, from his chariot hurled
Hodius, the sturdy Halizonian chief;
Him, as he turned, between the shoulder-blades 45
The javelin struck, and through his chest was driven;
Thundering he fell, and loud his armour rang.

On Phæstus, Borus' son, Mæonian chief,
Who from the fertile plains of Tarna came,
Then sprang Idomeneus; and as he sought 50
To mount upon his car, the Cretan King
Through his right shoulder drove the pointed spear;
He fell; the shades of death his eyes o'erspread,
And of his arms the followers stripped his corpse.

The son of Atreus, Menelæus, slew 55
Scamandrius, son of Strophius, sportsman keen,
In woodcraft skilful; for his practised hand
Had by Diana's self been taught to slay
Each beast of chase the mountain forest holds.
But nought availed him then the Archer-Queen 60
Diana's counsels, nor his boasted art

Of distant aim ; for as he fled, the lance
Of Meneläus, Atreus' warlike son,
Behind his neck, between the shoulder-blades,
His flight arresting, through his chest was driven. 65
Headlong he fell, and loud his armour rang.

Phereclus by Meriones was slain;
Son of Harmonides, whose practised hand
Knew well to fashion many a work of art ;
By Pallas highly favoured ; he the ships 70
For Paris built, first origin of ill,
Freighted with evil to the men of Troy,
And to himself, who knew not Heaven's decrees.
Him, in his headlong flight, in hot pursuit
Meriones o'ertook, and thrust his lance 75
Through his right flank ; beneath the bone was driven
The spear, and pierced him through : prone on his knees,
Groaning, he fell, and death his eyelids closed.

Meges Pedæus slew, Antenor's son,
A bastard born, but by Theano reared 80
With tender care, and nurtured as her son,
With her own children, for her husband's sake.
Him, Phyleus' warrior son, approaching near,

Thrust through the junction of the head and neck;
Crashed through his teeth the spear beneath the tongue; 85
Prone in the dust he gnashed the brazen point.

Eurypylus, Euzemon's noble son,
Hypsenor slew, the godlike progeny
Of Dolopion brave; Scamander's priest,
And by the people as a God revered: 90
Him, as he fled before him, from behind

Eurypylus, Euzemon's noble son,
Smote with the sword; and from the shoulder-point
The brawny arm he severed; to the ground
Down fell the gory hand; the darkling shades 95
Of death, and rigorous doom, his eyelids closed.

Thus laboured they amid the stubborn fight;
But of Tydides none might say to whom
His arm belonged, or whether with the hosts
Of Troy or Greece he mingled in the fight: 100
Hither and thither o'er the plain he rushed,
Like to a wintry stream, that brimming o'er
Breaks down its barriers in its rapid course;
Nor well-built bridge can stem the flood, nor fence
That guards the fertile fields, as down it pours 105

Its sudden torrent, swoll'n with rain from Heaven,
And many a goodly work of man destroys :
So back were borne before Tydides' might
The serried ranks of Troy, nor dared await,
Despite their numbers, his impetuous charge. 110

Him when Lycaon's noble son beheld
Careering o'er the plain, the serried ranks
Driving before him, quick at Tydeus' son
He bent his bow ; and onward as he rushed,
On the right shoulder, near the breastplate's joint, 115
The stinging arrow struck ; right through it passed,
And held its way, that blood the breastplate stained.
Then shouted loud Lycaon's noble son :

" Arouse ye, valiant Trojans, ye who goad
Your flying steeds ; the bravest of the Greeks 120
Is wounded, nor, I deem, can long withstand
My weapon, if indeed from Lycia's shore
By Phœbus' counsel sent I joined the war."

Thus he, vain-glorious ; but not so was quelled
The godlike chief ; back he withdrew, and stood 125
Beside his car, and thus to Sthenelus,
The son of Capaneus, his speech addressed :

“ Up, gentle son of Capaneus, descend
From off the car, and from my shoulder draw
This stinging arrow forth.” He said, and down 130
Leaped from the chariot Sthenelus, and stood
Beside him; and as forth he drew the shaft,
Gushed out the blood, and dyed the twisted mail.
Then thus the valiant son of Tydeus prayed :
“ Hear me, thou child of ægis-bearing Jove, 135
Unconquered ! if amid the deadly fight
Thy friendly aid my father e’er sustained,
Let me in turn thy favour find ; and grant
Within my reach and compass of my spear
That man may find himself, who unawares 140
Hath wounded me, and vainly boasting deems
I shall not long behold the light of day.”
Thus prayed the chief, and Pallas heard his prayer ;
To all his limbs, to feet and hands alike,
She gave fresh vigour ; and with wingèd words, 145
Beside him as she stood, addressed him thus :
“ Go fearless onward, Diomed, to meet
The Trojan hosts ; for I within thy breast
Thy father’s dauntless courage have infused,

Such as of old in Tydeus' bosom dwelt, 150
Bold horseman, buckler-clad; and from thine eyes
The film that dimmed them I have purged away,
That thou mayst well 'twixt Gods and men discern.
If then some God make trial of thy force,
With other of the Immortals fight thou not; 155
But should Jove's daughter Venus dare the fray,
Thou needst not shun at her to cast thy spear."

This said, the blue-eyed Goddess disappeared.
Forthwith again amid the foremost ranks
Tydides mingled; keenly as before 160
His spirit against the Trojans burned to fight,
With threefold fury now he sought the fray.
As when a hungry lion has o'erleaped
The sheepfold; him the guardian of the flock
Has wounded, not disabled; by his wound 165
To rage excited, but not forced to fly,
The fold he enters, scares the trembling sheep,
That, closely huddled, each on other press,
Then pounces on his prey, and leaps the fence:
So pounced Tydides on the Trojan host. 170
Astynōus and Hypeiron then he slew,

His people's guardian; through the breast of one
He drove his spear, and with his mighty sword
He smote the other on the collar-bone,
The shoulder severing from the neck and back. 175
Them left he there to lie; of Abas then
And Polyeidus went in hot pursuit,
Sons of Eurydamas, an aged seer,
Whose visions stayed them not; but both were doomed
A prey to valiant Diomed to fall. 180
Xanthus and Thōon then the hero slew,
The sons of Phænops, children of his age:
He, worn with years, no other sons begot,
Heirs of his wealth; they two together fell,
And to their father left a load of grief, 185
That from the battle they returned not home,
And distant kindred all his substance shared.
On Chromius and Echemon next he fell,
Two sons of Priam on one chariot borne;
And as a lion springs upon a herd, 190
And breaks the neck of heifer or of steer,
Feeding in woodland glade; with such a spring
These two, in vain resisting, from their car

Tydides hurled; then stripped their arms, and bade
His followers lead their horses to the ships. 195

Him when Æneas saw amid the ranks
Dealing destruction, through the fight and throng
Of spears he plunged, if haply he might find
The godlike Pandarus; Lycaon's son
He found, of noble birth and stalwart form, 200
And stood before him, and addressed him thus:
"Where, Pandarus, are now thy wingèd shafts,
Thy bow, and well-known skill, wherein with thee
Can no man here contend? nor Lycia boasts,
Through all her wide-spread plains, a truer aim; 205
Then raise to Jove thy hands, and with thy shaft
Strike down this chief, whoe'er he be, that thus
Is making fearful havoc in our host,
Relaxing many a warrior's limbs in death:
If he be not indeed a God, incensed 210
Against the Trojans for neglected rites;
For fearful is the vengeance of a God."

Whom answered thus Lycaon's noble son:
"Æneas, chief and counsellor of Troy,
Most like in all respects to Tydeus' son 215

He seems; his shield I know, and visored helm,
And horses; whether he himself be God,
I cannot tell; but if he be indeed
The man I think him, Tydeus' valiant son,
He fights not thus without the aid of Heaven; 220
But by his side, his shoulders veiled in cloud,
Some God attends his steps, and turns away
The shaft that just hath reached him; for even now
A shaft I shot, which by the breastplate's joint
Pierced his right shoulder through: full sure I deemed 225
That shaft had sent him to the shades, and yet
It slew him not; 'tis sure some angry God.
Nor horse have I, nor car on which to mount;
But in my sire Lycaon's wealthy house
Eleven fair chariots stand, all newly built, 230
Each with its cover; by the side of each
Two steeds on rye and barley white are fed;
And in his well-built house, when here I came,
Lycaon, aged warrior, urged me oft,
With horses and with chariots high upborne, 235
To lead the Trojans in the stubborn fight;
I hearkened not—'twere better if I had—

'Yet feared I lest my horses, wont to feed
In plenty unstinted, by the soldiers' wants
Might of their customary forage be deprived; 240
I left them there, and hither came on foot,
And trusting to my bow: vain trust, it seems;
Two chiefs already have I struck, the sons
Of Tydeus and of Atreus; with true aim
Drawn blood from both, yet but increased their rage. 245
Sad was the hour when down from where it hung
I took my bow, and hasting to the aid
Of godlike Hector, hither led my troops;
But should I e'er return, and see again
My native land, my wife, my lofty hall, 250
Then may a stranger's sword cut off my head,
If with these hands I shatter not, and burn,
The bow that thus hath failed me at my need."

Him answered thus Æneas, chief of Troy:
"Speak thou not thus; our fortunes shall not change 255
Till thou and I, with chariot and with horse,
This chief encounter, and his prowess prove;
Then mount my car, and see how swift my steeds,
Hither and thither, in pursuit or flight,

From those of Tros descended, scour the plain. 260

So if the victory to Diomed,

The son of Tydeus, should by Jove be given,

We yet may safely reach the walls of Troy.

Take thou the whip and reins, while I descend

To fight on foot; or thou the chief engage, 265

And leave to me the conduct of the car."

Whom answered thus Lycaon's noble son:

"Æneas, of thy horses and thy car

Take thou the charge; beneath the accustomed hand,

With more assurance would they draw the car, 270

If we from Tydeus' son be forced to fly;

Nor, struck with panic, and thy voice unheard,

Refuse to bear us from the battle-field;

So should ourselves be slain, and Tydeus' son

In triumph drive thy horses to the ships. 275

But thou thy horses and thy chariot guide,

While I his onset with my lance receive."

Thus saying, on the car they mounted both,

And toward Tydides urged their eager steeds.

Them Sthenelus beheld, the noble son 280

Of Capaneus, and to Tydides cried:

“ Oh son of Tydeus, dearest to my soul,
Two men I see, of might invincible,
Impatient to engage thee; Pandarus,
Well skilled in archery, Lycaon's son; 285
With him Æneas, great Anchises' son,
Who from immortal Venus boasts his birth.
Then let us timely to the car retreat,
Lest, moving thus amid the foremost ranks,
Thy daring pay the forfeit of thy life.” 290

To whom brave Diomed with stern regard :
“ Talk not to me of flight ! I heed thee not !
It is not in my nature so to fight
With skulking artifice and faint retreat ;
My strength is yet unbroken ; I should shame 295
To mount the car ; but forward will I go
To meet these chiefs' encounter ; for my soul
Pallas forbids the touch of fear to know.
Nor shall their horses' speed procure for both
A safe return, though one escape my arm. 300
This too I say, and bear my words in mind ;
By Pallas' counsel if my hap should be
To slay them both, leave thou my horses here,

The reins attaching to the chariot-rail,
And seize, and from the Trojans to the ships 305
Drive off the horses in Æneas' car ;
From those descended, which all-seeing Jove
On Tros, for Ganymede his son, bestowed :
With these may none beneath the sun compare.
Anchises, King of men, the breed obtained 310
By cunning, to the horses sending mares
Without the knowledge of Laomedon.
Six colts were thus engendered : four of these
In his own stalls he reared ; the other two
Gave to Æneas, fear-inspiring chief : 315
These could we win, our praise were great indeed."
Such converse while they held, the twain approached,
Their horses urged to speed ; then thus began,
To Diomed, Lycaon's noble son :
"Great son of Tydeus, warrior brave and skilled, 320
My shaft, it seems, has failed to reach thy life ;
Try we then now what hap attends my spear."
He said ; and, poising, hurled his ponderous spear,
And struck Tydides' shield ; right through the shield
Drove the keen weapon, and the breastplate reached. 325

Then shouted loud Lycaon's noble son:

"Thou hast it through the flank, nor canst thou long
Survive the blow; great glory now is mine."

To whom, unmoved, the valiant Diomed:

"Thine aim hath failed, I am not touched; and now 330
I deem we part not hence till one of ye
Glut with his blood the insatiate Lord of War."

He said: the spear, by Pallas guided, struck
Beside the nostril, underneath the eye;
Crashed through the teeth, and cutting through the tongue
Beneath the angle of the jaw came forth: 336
Down from the car he fell; and loudly rang
His glittering arms: aside the startled steeds
Sprang devious: from his limbs the spirit fled.
Down leaped Æneas, spear and shield in hand, 340
Against the Greeks to guard the valiant dead;
And like a lion, fearless in his strength,
Around the corpse he stalked, this way and that,
His spear and buckler round before him held,
To all who dared approach him threat'ning death, 345
With fearful shouts; a rocky fragment then
Tydides lifted up, a mighty mass,

Which scarce two men could raise, as men are now :

But he, unaided, lifted it with ease.

With this he smote Æneas near the groin, 350

Where the thigh-bone, inserted in the hip,

Turns in the socket-joint; the rugged mass

The socket crushed, and both the tendons broke,

And tore away the flesh : down on his knees,

Yet resting on his hand, the hero fell ; 355

And o'er his eyes the shades of darkness spread.

Then had Æneas, King of men, been slain,

Had not his mother, Venus, child of Jove,

Who to Anchises, where he fed his flocks,

The hero bore, his peril quickly seen : 360

Around her son she threw her snowy arms,

And with a veil, thick-folded, wrapt him round,

From hostile spears to guard him, lest some Greek

Should pierce his breast, and rob him of his life.

She from the battle thus her son removed ; 365

Nor did the son of Capaneus neglect

The strict injunction by Tydides given ;

His reins attaching to the chariot-rail,

Far from the battle-din he checked, and left,

His own fleet steeds; then rushing forward, seized, 370

And from the Trojans toward the camp drove off,

The sleek-skinned horses of Æneas' car.

These to Deipylus, his chosen friend,

He gave, of all his comrades best esteemed,

Of soundest judgment, toward the ships to drive. 375

Then, his own car remounting, seized the reins,

And urged with eager haste his fiery steeds,

Seeking Tydides; he, meanwhile, pressed on

In keen pursuit of Venus; her he knew

A weak, unwarlike Goddess, not of those 380

That like Bellona fierce, or Pallas, range

Exulting through the blood-stained fields of war.

Her, searching through the crowd, at length he found,

And springing forward, with his pointed spear

A wound inflicted on her tender hand. 385

Piercing the ambrosial veil, the Graces' work,

The sharp spear grazed her palm below the wrist.

Forth from the wound the immortal current flowed,

Pure ichor, life-stream of the blessed Gods;

They eat no bread, they drink no ruddy wine, 390

And bloodless thence and deathless they become.

The Goddess shrieked aloud, and dropped her son ;
But in his arms Apollo bore him off
In a thick cloud enveloped, lest some Greek
Might pierce his breast, and rob him of his life. 395
Loud shouted brave Tydides, as she fled :
“ Daughter of Jove, from battle-fields retire ;
Enough for thee weak women to delude ;
If war thou seek'st, the lesson thou shalt learn
Shall cause thee shudder but to hear it named.” 400
Thus he ; but ill at ease, and sorely pained,
The Goddess fled : her, Iris, swift as wind,
Caught up, and from the tumult bore away,
Weeping with pain, her fair skin soiled with blood.
Mars on the left hand of the battle-field 405
She found, his spear reclining by his side,
And, veiled in cloud, his car and flying steeds.
Kneeling, her brother she besought to lend
The flying steeds, with golden frontlets crowned :
“ Dear brother, aid me hence, and lend thy car 410
To bear me to Olympus, seat of Gods ;
Great is the pain I suffer from a wound
Received from Diomed, a mortal man,

Who now would dare with Jove himself to fight."

He lent the steeds, with golden frontlets crowned; 415

In deep distress she mounted on the car:

Beside her Iris stood, and took the reins,

And urged the coursers; nothing loth they flew,

And soon to high Olympus, seat of Gods,

They came: swift Iris there the coursers stayed, 420

Loosed from the chariot, and before them placed

Ambrosial forage: on her mother's lap,

Dione, Venus fell; she in her arms

Embraced, and soothed her with her hand, and said:

"Which of the heavenly powers hath wronged thee thus, 425

My child, as guilty of some open shame?"

Whom answered thus the laughter-loving Queen:

"The haughty son of Tydeus, Diomed,

Hath wounded me, because my dearest son,

Æneas, from the field I bore away. 430

No more 'twixt Greeks and Trojans is the fight,

But with the Gods themselves the Greeks contend."

To whom Dione, heavenly Goddess, thus:

"Have patience, dearest child; though much enforced,

Restrain thine anger: we, in Heaven who dwell, 435

Have much to bear from mortals; and ourselves
Too oft upon each other sufferings lay.
Mars had his sufferings; by Alœus' sons,
Otus and Ephialtes, strongly bound,
He thirteen months in brazen fetters lay: 440
And there had pined away the God of War,
Insatiate Mars, had not their step-mother,
The beauteous Eriboea, sought the aid
Of Hermes; he by stealth released the God,
Sore worn and wasted by his galling chains. 445
Juno too suffered, when Amphitryon's son
Through her right breast a three-barbed arrow sent:
Dire, and unheard of, were the pangs she bore.
Great Pluto's self the stinging arrow felt,
When that same son of ægis-bearing Jove 450
Assailed him in the very gates of hell,
And wrought him keenest anguish; pierced with pain
To high Olympus, to the courts of Jove,
Groaning, he came; the bitter shaft remained
Deep in his shoulder fixed, and grieved his soul: 455
But soon with soothing ointments Pæon's hand
(For death on him was powerless) healed the wound.

Accursed was he, of daring over-bold,
Reckless of evil deeds, who with his bow
Assailed the Gods, who on Olympus dwell. 460
The blue-eyed Pallas, well I know, has urged
Tydides to assail thee; fool and blind!
Unknowing he how short his term of life
Who fights against the Gods! for him no child
Upon his knees shall lisp a father's name, 465
Safe from the war and battle-field returned.
Brave as he is, let Diomed beware
He meet not some more dangerous foe than thee.
Then fair Ægiale, Adrastus' child,
The noble wife of valiant Diomed, 470
Shall long, with lamentations loud, disturb
The slumbers of her house, and vainly mourn
Her youthful Lord, the bravest of the Greeks."
She said; and wiped the ichor from the wound;
The hand was healed, the grievous pains allayed. 475
But Juno and Minerva, looking on,
With words of bitter mockery Saturn's son
Provoked: and thus the blue-eyed Goddess spoke:
"O Father! may I speak without offence?"

Venus, it seems, has sought to lead astray 480
Some Grecian woman, and persuade to join
Those Trojans, whom she holds in high esteem ;
And, as her hand the gentle dame caressed,
A golden clasp has scratched her slender arm."

Thus she: and smiled the Sire of Gods and men; 485
He called the golden Venus to his side,
And, "Not to thee, my child," he said, "belong
The deeds of war; do thou bestow thy care
On deeds of love, and tender marriage ties;
But leave to Mars and Pallas feats of arms." 490

Such converse while they held, brave Diomed
Again assailed Æneas; well he knew
Apollo's guardian hand around him thrown;
Yet by the God undaunted, on he pressed
To slay Æneas, and his arms obtain. 495

Thrice was his onset made, with murderous aim;
And thrice Apollo struck his glittering shield;
But when, with godlike force, he sought to make
His fourth attempt, the Far-destroyer spoke
In terms of awful menace: "Be advised, 500
Tydides, and retire; nor as a God

Esteem thyself; since not alike the race
Of Gods immortal and of earth-born men."

He said; and Diomed a little space
Before the Far-destroyer's wrath retired: 505

Apollo then Æneas bore away
Far from the tumult; and in Pergamus,
Where stood his sacred shrine, bestowed him safe.

Latona there, and Dian, Archer-Queen,
In the great temple's innermost recess, 510

Gave to his wounds their care, and soothed his pride.

Meanwhile Apollo of the silver bow

A phantom form prepared, the counterpart

Of great Æneas, and alike in arms:

Around the form, of Trojans and of Greeks, 515

Loud was the din of battle; fierce the strokes

That fell on rounded shield of tough bull's-hide,

And lighter targe, before each warrior's breast.

Then thus Apollo to the God of War:

"Mars! Mars! thou bane of mortals, blood-stained Lord, 520

Razer of cities, wer't not well thyself

To interpose, and from the battle-field

Withdraw this chief, Tydides? such his pride,

He now would dare with Jove himself to fight.

Venus, of late, he wounded in the wrist; 525

And, like a God, but now confronted me."

He said, and sat on Ilium's topmost height:

While Mars, in likeness of the Thracian chief,

Swift Acamas, amid the Trojan ranks

Moved to and fro, and urged them to the fight. 530

To Priam's Heaven-descended sons he called;

"Ye sons of Priam, Heaven-descended King,

How long will ye behold your people slain?

Till to your very doors the war be brought?

Æneas, noble-souled Anchises' son, 535

In like esteem with Hector held, is down;

On to his aid! our gallant comrade save!"

He said; his words fresh courage gave to all:

Then thus Sarpedon, in reproachful tone,

Addressed the godlike Hector: "Where is now, 540

Hector, the spirit that heretofore was thine?

'Twas once thy boast that even without allies

Thyself, thy brethren, and thy house, alone

The city could defend: for all of these

I look in vain, and see not one; they all, 545

As curs around a lion, cower and crouch :

We, strangers and allies, maintain the fight.

I to your aid, from lands afar remote,

From Lycia came, by Xanthus' eddying stream ;

There left a cherished wife, and infant son, 550

And rich possessions, which might envy move ;

Yet I my troops encourage ; and myself

Have played my part, though nought have I to lose,

Nought that the Greeks could drive or bear away ;

But thou stand'st idly by ; nor bidd'st the rest 555

Maintain their ground, and guard their wives and homes.

Beware lest ye, as in the meshes caught

Of some wide-sweeping net, become the prey

And booty of your foes, who soon shall lay

Your prosp'rous city level with the dust. 560

By day and night should this thy thoughts engage,

With constant prayer to all thy brave allies,

Firmly to stand, and wipe this shame away."

He said ; and Hector felt the biting speech ;

Down from his car he leaped ; and through the ranks, 565

Two javelins brandishing, he passed, to arms

Exciting all, and raised his battle-cry.

The tide was turned; again they faced the Greeks:
In serried ranks the Greeks, undaunted, stood.
As when the wind from off a threshing-floor, 570
Where men are winnowing, blows the chaff away;
When yellow Ceres with the breeze divides
The corn and chaff, which lies in whitening heaps;
So thick the Greeks were whitened o'er with dust,
Which to the brazen vault of Heaven arose 575
Beneath the horses' feet, that with the crowd
Were mingled, by their drivers turned to flight.
Unwearied still, they bore the brunt; but Mars
The Trojans succouring, the battle-field
Veiled in thick clouds, from every quarter brought. 580
Thus he of Phœbus of the golden sword
Obeyed the injunction, bidding him arouse
The courage of the Trojans, when he saw
Pallas approaching to support the Greeks.
Then from the wealthy shrine Apollo's self 585
Æneas brought, and vigour fresh infused:
Amid his comrades once again he stood;
They joyed to see him yet alive, and sound,
And full of vigour; yet no question asked:

No time for question then, amid the toils 590

Imposed by Phœbus of the silver bow,

And blood-stained Mars, and Discord unappeased.

Meanwhile Ulysses, and the Ajaces both,

And Diomed, with courage for the fight

The Grecian force inspired; they undismayed 595

Shrank not before the Trojans' rush and charge;

In masses firm they stood, as when the clouds

Are gathered round the misty mountain top

By Saturn's son, in breathless calm, while sleep

The force of Boreas and the stormy winds, 600

That with their breath the shadowy clouds disperse;

So stood the Greeks, nor shunned the Trojans' charge.

Through all the army Agamemnon passed,

And cried, "Brave comrades, quit ye now like men;

Bear a stout heart; and in the stubborn fight, 605

Let each to other mutual succour give;

By mutual succour more are saved than fall;

In timid flight nor fame nor safety lies."

Thus he: and straight his javelin threw, and struck

A man of mark, Æneas' faithful friend, 610

Deicöon, the son of Pergasus,

By Troy, as ever foremost in the field,
In equal honour held with Priam's sons.
His shield the monarch Agamemnon struck;
The shield's defence was vain; the spear passed through 615
Beneath the belt, and in his groin was lodged;
Thundering he fell, and loud his armour rang.

On the other side, Æneas slew two chiefs,
The bravest of the Greeks, Orsilochus
And Crethon, sons of Diocles, who dwelt 620
In thriving Phera; rich in substance he,
And from the mighty River Alpheus traced
His high descent, who through the Pylia land
His copious waters pours; to him was born
Orsilochus, of numerous tribes the chief; 625
To him succeeded valiant Diocles;
To whom were born twin sons, Orsilochus
And Crethon, skilled in every point of war.
They, in the vigour of their youth, to Troy
Had sailed amid the dark-ribbed ships of Greece, 630
Of Atreus' sons the quarrel to uphold;
But o'er them both the shades of death were spread.
As two young lions, by their tawny dam

Nursed in the mountain forest's deep recess,
On flocks and herds their youthful fury pour, 635
With havoc to the sheepfolds, till themselves
Succumb, o'ermastered by the hand of man:
So fell these two beneath Æneas' hand,
And like two lofty pines in death they lay.
 The warlike Menelæus saw their fall 640
With pitying eye; and through the foremost ranks
With brandished spear advanced, by Mars impelled,
Who hoped his death by great Æneas' hand.
Him Nestor's son, Antilochus, beheld,
And hastened to his aid; for much he feared 645
Lest ill befall the monarch, and his death
Deprive them of their warlike labours' fruit.
They two, with force combined of hand and spear,
Pressed onward to the fight; Antilochus
His station keeping close beside the King. 650
Before the two combined, Æneas feared,
Bold warrior as he was, to hold his ground.
The slain they drew within the Grecian lines,
Placed in their comrades' hands, and turning back
Amid the foremost mingled in the fray. 655

Then, brave as Mars, Pylæmenes they slew,
The bucklered Paphlagonians' warlike chief;
Him Menelæus, hand to hand engaged,
Pierced with a spear-thrust through the collar-bone;
While, with a ponderous stone, Antilochus 660
Full on the elbow smote Atymnius' son,
Mydon, his charioteer, in act to turn
His fiery steeds to flight; down from his hands
Fell to the ground the ivory-mounted reins.
On rushed Antilochus, and with his sword 665
Across the temples smote him; gasping, he
Upon his neck and shoulders from the car
Pitched headlong; and (for there the sand was deep)
Awhile stood balanced, till the horses' feet
Dashed him upon the ground; Antilochus, 670
The horses seizing, drove them to the ships.

Hector beheld athwart the ranks, and rushed,
Loud shouting, to the encounter; at his back
Followed the thronging bands of Troy, by Mars
And fierce Bellona led: she by the hand 675
Wild Uproar held; while Mars a giant spear
Brandished aloft; and stalking now before,

Now following after Hector, urged them on.
Quailed at the sight the valiant Diomed:
As when a man, long journeying o'er the plain, 680
All unprepared, stands sudden on the brink
Of a swift stream, down rushing to the sea,
Boiling with foam, and back recoils; so then
Recoiled Tydides, and addressed the crowd:
" O friends, we marvel at the might displayed 685
By Hector, spearman skilled and warrior bold;
But still some guardian God his steps attends,
And shields from danger; now beside him stands,
In likeness of a mortal, Mars himself.
Then turning still your faces to your foes, 690
Retire, nor venture with the Gods to fight."
He said; the Trojans now were close at hand,
And, mounted both upon a single car,
Two chiefs, Menesthes and Anchialus,
Well skilled in war, by Hector's hand were slain. 695
With pitying eyes great Ajax Telamon
Beheld their fall; advancing close, he threw
His glittering spear; the son of Selagus
It struck, Amphius, who in Pæsus dwelt,

In land and substance rich; by evil fate 700
Impelled, to Priam's house he brought his aid.
Below the belt the spear of Ajax struck,
And in his groin the point was buried deep;
Thundering he fell; then forward Ajax sprang
To seize the spoils of war; but fast and fierce 705
The Trojans showered their weapons bright and keen,
And many a lance the mighty shield received.
Ajax, his foot firm planted on the slain,
Withdrew the brazen spear; yet could not strip
His armour off, so galling flew the shafts; 710
And much he feared the foes might hem him in,
Who closely pressed upon him, many and brave;
And, valiant as he was, and tall, and strong,
Still drove him backward; he perforce retired.
Thus laboured they amid the stubborn fight. 715
Then evil fate induced Tlepolemus,
Valiant and strong, the son of Hercules,
Heaven-born Sarpedon to confront in fight.
When near they came, of cloud-compelling Jove
Grandson and son, Tlepolemus began: 720
"Sarpedon, Lycian chief, what brings thee here,

Trembling and crouching, all unskilled in war?
Falsely they speak who fable thee the son
Of ægis-bearing Jove; so far art thou
Beneath their mark who claimed in elder days 725
That royal lineage: such my father was,
Of courage resolute, of lion heart.
With but six ships, and with a scanty band,
The horses by Laomedon withheld
Avenging, he o'erthrew this city, Troy, 730
And made her streets a desert; but thy soul
Is poor, thy troops are wasting fast away;
Nor deem I that the Trojans will in thee
(E'en were thy valour more) and Lycia's aid
Their safeguard find; but vanquished by my hand, 735
This day the gates of Hades thou shalt pass."
To whom the Lycian chief, Sarpedon, thus:
"Tlepolemus, the sacred walls of Troy
Thy sire o'erthrew, by folly of one man,
Laomedon, who with injurious words 740
His noble service recompensed; nor gave
The promised steeds, for which he came from far.
For thee, I deem thou now shalt meet thy doom

Here, at my hand; on thee my spear shall win
Renown for me, thy soul to Hades send." 745

Thus as Sarpedon spoke, Tlepolemus
Upraised his ashen spear; from both their hands
The ponderous weapons simultaneous flew.
Full in the throat Tlepolemus received
Sarpedon's spear; right through the neck it passed, 750
And o'er his eyes the shades of death were spread.
On the other side his spear Sarpedon struck
On the left thigh; the eager weapon passed
Right through the flesh, and in the bone was fixed;
The stroke of death his father turned aside. 755
Sarpedon from the field his comrades bore,
Weighed down and tortured by the trailing spear;
For, in their haste to bear him to his car,
Not one bethought him from his thigh to draw
The weapon forth; so sorely were they pressed. 760

The Greeks too from the battle-field conveyed
The slain Tlepolemus; Ulysses saw,
Patient of spirit, but deeply moved at heart;
And with conflicting thoughts his breast was torn,
If first he should pursue the Thunderer's son, 765

Or deal destruction on the Lycian host.
But fate had not decreed the valiant son
Of Jove to fall beneath Ulysses' hand ;
So on the Lycians Pallas turned his wrath.
Alastor then, and Cœranus he slew, 770
Chromius, Alcander, Halius, Prytanis,
Nœmon ; nor had ended then the list
Of Lycian warriors by Ulysses slain ;
But Hector of the glancing helm beheld ;
Through the front ranks he rushed, with burnished crest 775
Resplendent, flashing terror on the Greeks ;
With joy Sarpedon saw his near approach,
And with imploring tones addressed him thus :
 “ Hector, thou son of Priam, leave me not
A victim to the Greeks, but lend thine aid : 780
Then in your city let me end my days :
For not to me is given again to see
My native land ; or, safe returning home,
To glad my sorrowing wife and infant child.”
 Thus he : but Hector, answering not a word, 785
Passed on in silence, hasting to pursue
The Greeks, and pour destruction on their host.

Beneath the oak of ægis-bearing Jove
His faithful comrades laid Sarpedon down,
And from his thigh the valiant Pelagon, 790
His loved companion, drew the ashen spear.
He swooned, and giddy mists o'erspread his eyes:
But soon revived, as on his forehead blew,
While yet he gasped for breath, the cooling breeze.

By Mars and Hector of the brazen helm 795
The Greeks hard-pressed, yet fled not to their ships,
Nor yet sustained the fight; but back retired
Soon as they learned the presence of the God.
Say then who first, who last, the prowess felt
Of Hector, Priam's son, and mail-clad Mars? 800
The godlike Teuthras first, Orestes next,
Bold charioteer; the Ætolian spearman skilled,
Trechus, Cœnomäus, and Helenus,
The son of Cœnops; and Oresbius, girt
With sparkling girdle; he in Hyla dwelt, 805
The careful Lord of boundless wealth, beside
Cephisus' marshy banks; Boeotia's chiefs
Around him dwelt, on fat and fertile soil.
Juno, the white-armed Queen, who saw these two

The Greeks destroying in the stubborn fight, 810

To Pallas thus her wingèd words addressed :

“O Heaven ! brave child of ægis-bearing Jove,

Vain was our word to Menelæus given,

That he the well-built walls of Troy should raze,

And safe return, if unrestrained we leave 815

Ferocious Mars to urge his mad career.

Come then ; let us too mingle in the fray.”

She said : and Pallas, blue-eyed Maid, complied.

Offspring of Saturn, Juno, heavenly Queen,

Herself the immortal steeds caparisoned, 820

Adorned with golden frontlets : to the car

Hebe the circling wheels of brass attached,

Eight-spoked, that on an iron axle turned ;

The felloes were of gold, and fitted round

With brazen tires, a marvel to behold ; 825

The naves were silver, rounded every way :

The chariot-board on gold and silver bands

Was hung, and round it ran a double rail :

The pole was all of silver ; at the end

A golden yoke, with golden yoke-bands fair : 830

And Juno, all on fire to join the fray,

Beneath the yoke the flying coursers led.

Pallas, the child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Within her father's threshold dropped her veil,
Of airy texture, work of her own hands; 835

The cuirass donned of cloud-compelling Jove,
And stood accoutred for the bloody fray.

Her tasselled ægis round her shoulders next
She threw, with Terror circled all around;
And on its face were figured deeds of arms, 840

And Strife, and Courage high, and panic Rout;
There too a Gorgon's head, of monstrous size,
Frowned terrible, portent of angry Jove:

And on her head a golden helm she placed,
Four-crested, double-peaked, whose ample verge 845
A hundred cities' champions might suffice:

Her fiery car she mounted: in her hand
A spear she bore, long, weighty, tough; wherewith
The mighty daughter of a mighty sire
Sweeps down the ranks of those her hate pursues. 850

Then Juno sharply touched the flying steeds;
Forthwith spontaneous opening, grated harsh
The heavenly portals, guarded by the Hours,

Who Heaven and high Olympus have in charge
To roll aside, or draw the veil of cloud. 855

Through these the excited horses held their way.
They found the son of Saturn, from the Gods
Sitting apart, upon the highest crest
Of many-ridged Olympus; there arrived,
The white-armed Goddess Juno stayed her steeds, 860
And thus addressed the Sovereign Lord of Heaven :

“O Father Jove! canst thou behold unmoved
The violence of Mars? how many Greeks,
Reckless and uncontrolled, he hath destroyed;
To me a source of bitter grief; meanwhile 865
Venus and Phœbus of the silver bow
Look on, well pleased, who sent this madman forth,
To whom both law and justice are unknown.
Say, Father Jove, shall I thine anger move,
If with disgrace I drive him from the field?” 870

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied:
“Go, send against him Pallas; she, I know,
Hath oft inflicted on him grievous pain.”

He said: the white-armed Queen with joy obeyed:
She urged her horses; nothing loth, they flew 875

Midway between the earth and starry Heaven :
Far as his sight extends, who from on high
Looks from his watch-tower o'er the dark-blue sea,
So far at once the neighing horses bound.
But when to Troy they came, beside the streams 880
Where Simöis' and Scamander's waters meet,
The white-armed Goddess stayed her flying steeds,
Loosed from the car, and veiled in densest cloud.
For them, at bidding of the river-God,
Ambrosial forage grew: the Goddesses, 885
Swift as the wild wood-pigeon's rapid flight,
Sped to the battle-field to aid the Greeks.
But when they reached the thickest of the fray,
Where thronged around the might of Diomed
The bravest and the best, as lions fierce, 890
Or forest-boars, the mightiest of their kind,
There stood the white-armed Queen, and called aloud,
In form of Stentor, of the brazen voice,
Whose shout was as the shout of fifty men :
 "Shame on ye, Greeks, base cowards! brave alone 895
In outward semblance; while Achilles yet
Went forth to battle, from the Dardan gates

The Trojans never ventured to advance,
So dreaded they his ponderous spear; but now
Far from the walls, beside your ships, they fight." 900

She said: her words their drooping courage roused.
Meanwhile the blue-eyed Pallas went in haste
In search of Tydeus' son; beside his car
She found the King, in act to cool the wound
Inflicted by the shaft of Pandarus: 905

Beneath his shield's broad belt the clogging sweat
Oppressed him, and his arm was faint with toil;
The belt was lifted up, and from the wound
He wiped the clotted blood: beside the car
The Goddess stood, and touched the yoke, and said: 910

"Little like Tydeus' self is Tydeus' son:
Low was his stature, but his spirit was high:
And even when I from combat rashly waged
Would fain have kept him back, what time in Thebes
He found himself, an envoy and alone, 915
Without support, among the Thebans all,
I counselled him in peace to share the feast:
But by his own impetuous courage led,
He challenged all the Thebans to contend

With him in wrestling, and o'erthrew them all 920
With ease; so mighty was the aid I gave.
Thee now I stand beside, and guard from harm,
And bid thee boldly with the Trojans fight.
But, if the labours of the battle-field
O'ertask thy limbs, or heartless fear restrain, 925
No issue thou of valiant Tydeus' loins."

Whom answered thus the valiant Diomed:
"I know thee, Goddess, who thou art; the child
Of ægis-bearing Jove: to thee my mind
I freely speak, nor aught will I conceal. 930
Nor heartless fear, nor hesitating doubt,
Restrain me; but I bear thy words in mind,
With other of the Immortals not to fight:
But should Jove's daughter, Venus, dare the fray,
At her I need not shun to throw my spear. 935
Therefore I thus withdrew, and others too
Exhorted to retire, since Mars himself
I saw careering o'er the battle-field."

To whom the blue-eyed Goddess, Pallas, thus:
"Thou son of Tydeus, dearest to my soul, 940
Fear now no more with Mars himself to fight,

Nor other God; such aid will I bestow.

Come then; at him the first direct thy car;

Encounter with him hand to hand; nor fear

To strike this madman, this incarnate curse, 945

This shameless renegade; who late agreed

With Juno and with me to combat Troy,

And aid the Grecian cause; who now appears,

The Greeks deserting, in the Trojan ranks."

Thus Pallas spoke, and stretching forth her hand, 950

Backward his comrade Sthenelus she drew

From off the chariot; down in haste he sprang.

His place beside the valiant Diomed

The eager Goddess took; beneath the weight

Loud groaned the oaken axle; for the car 955

A mighty Goddess and a Hero bore.

Then Pallas took the whip and reins, and urged

Direct at Mars the fiery coursers' speed.

The bravest of the Ætolians, Periphas,

Ochesius' stalwart son, he just had slain, 960

And stood in act to strip him of his arms.

The helmet then of Darkness Pallas donned,

To hide her presence from the sight of Mars:

But when the blood-stained God of War beheld
Advancing toward him godlike Diomed, 965
The corpse of stalwart Periphas he left,
There where he fell, to lie; while he himself
Of valiant Diomed the encounter met.

When near they came, first Mars his ponderous spear
Advanced beyond the yoke and horses' reins, 970
With murderous aim; but Pallas from the car
Turned it aside, and foiled the vain attempt.

Then Diomed thrust forward in his turn
His ponderous spear; low on the flank of Mars,
Guided by Pallas, with successful aim, 975
Just where the belt was girt, the weapon struck:
It pierced the flesh, and straight was back withdrawn:

Then Mars cried out aloud, with such a shout
As if nine thousand or ten thousand men
Should simultaneous raise their battle-cry: 980
Trojans and Greeks alike in terror heard,
Trembling; so fearful was the cry of Mars.

As black with clouds appears the darkened air,
When after heat the blustering winds arise,
So Mars to valiant Diomed appeared, 985

As in thick clouds he took his heavenward flight.
With speed he came to great Olympus' heights,
The abode of Gods; and sitting by the throne
Of Saturn's son, with anguish torn, he showed
The immortal stream that trickled from the wound, 990
And thus to Jove his piteous words addressed:

 "O Father Jove, canst thou behold unmoved
These acts of violence? the greatest ills
We Gods endure, we each to other owe
Who still in human quarrels interpose. 995
Of thee we all complain; thy senseless child
Is ever on some evil deed intent.
The other Gods, who on Olympus dwell,
Are all to thee obedient and submit;
But thy pernicious daughter, nor by word 1000
Nor deed dost thou restrain; who now excites
The o'erbearing son of Tydeus, Diomed,
Upon the immortal Gods to vent his rage.
Venus of late he wounded in the wrist,
And, as a God, but now encountered me: 1005
Barely I 'scaped by swiftness of my feet;
Else, 'mid a ghastly heap of corpses slain,

In anguish had I lain; and, if alive,
Yet lived disabled by his weapon's stroke."

Whom answered thus the Cloud-compeller, Jove, 1010
With look indignant: "Come no more to me,
Thou wavering turncoat, with thy whining prayers:
Of all the Gods who on Olympus dwell
I hate thee most; for thou delight'st in nought
But strife and war; thou hast inherited 1015
Thy mother, Juno's, proud, unbending mood,
Whom I can scarce control; and thou, methinks,
To her suggestions ow'st thy present plight.
Yet since thou art my offspring, and to me
Thy mother bore thee, I must not permit 1020
That thou shouldst long be doomed to suffer pain;
But had thy birth been other than it is,
For thy misdoings thou hadst long ere now
Been banished from the Gods' companionship."

He said: and straight to Pæon gave command 1025
To heal the wound; with soothing anodynes
He healed it quickly; soon as liquid milk
Is curdled by the fig-tree's juice, and turns
In whirling flakes, so soon was healed the wound.

By Hebe bathed, and robed afresh, he sat 1030

In health and strength restored, by Saturn's son.

Mars thus arrested in his murderous course,

Together to the abode of Jove returned

The Queen of Argos and the blue-eyed Maid. 1034

BOOK VI.

THE Gods had left the field, and o'er the plain

Hither and thither surged the tide of war,
As couched the opposing chiefs their brass-tipped spears,
Midway 'twixt Simöis' and Scamander's streams.

First through the Trojan phalanx broke his way 5
The son of Telamon, the prop of Greece,
The mighty Ajax; on his friends the light
Of triumph shedding, as Eusorus' son
He smote, the noblest of the Thracian bands,
Valiant and strong, the gallant Acamas. 10
Full in the front, beneath the plumèd helm,
The sharp spear struck, and crashing through the bone,
The warrior's eyes were closed in endless night.

Next valiant Diomed Axylus slew,
The son of Teuthranes, who had his home 15
In fair Arisba; rich in substance he,
And loved of all; for, dwelling near the road,

He oped to all his hospitable gate ;
But none of all he entertained was there
To ward aside the bitter doom of death : 20
There fell they both, he and his charioteer,
Calesius, who athwart the battle-field
His chariot drove ; one fate o'ertook them both.

Then Dresus and Opheltius of their arms
Euryalus despoiled ; his hot pursuit 25
Æsepus next, and Pedasus assailed,
Brothers, whom Abarbarea, Naiad nymph,
To bold Bucolion bore ; Bucolion, son
Of great Laomedon, his eldest born,
Though bastard : he upon the mountain side, 30
On which his flocks he tended, met the nymph,
And of their secret loves twin sons were born ;
Whom now at once Euryalus of strength
And life deprived, and of their armour stripped.

By Polypoetes' hand, in battle strong, 35
Was slain Astyalus ; Pidutes fell,
Chief of Percote, by Ulysses' spear ;
And Teucer godlike Aretaon slew.
Antilochus, the son of Nestor, smote

With gleaming lance Ablerus; Elatus 40
By Agamemnon, King of men, was slain,
Who dwelt by Satnōis' widely-flowing stream,
Upon the lofty heights of Pedasus.
By Lōitus was Phylacus in flight
O'erta'en; Eurypylos Melanthius slew. 45
Then Menelāus, good in battle, took
Adrastus captive; for his horses, scared
And rushing wildly o'er the plain, amid
The tangled tamarisk scrub his chariot broke,
Snapping the pole; they with the flying crowd 50
Held city-ward their course; he from the car
Hurled headlong, prostrate lay beside the wheel,
Prone on his face in dust; and at his side,
Poising his mighty spear, Atrides stood.
Adrastus clasped his knees, and suppliant cried, 55
"Spare me, great son of Atreus! for my life
Accept a price; my wealthy father's house
A goodly store contains of brass, and gold,
And well-wrought iron; and of these he fain
Would pay a noble ransom, could he hear 60
That in the Grecian ships I yet survived."

His words to pity moved the victor's breast;
Then had he bade his followers to the ships
The captive bear; but running up in haste,
Fierce Agamemnon cried in stern rebuke; 65

“Soft-hearted Menelæus, why of life
So tender? Hath thy house received indeed
Nothing but benefits at Trojan hands?
Of that abhorred race, let not a man
Escape the deadly vengeance of our arms; 70
No, not the infant in its mother's womb;
No, nor the fugitive; but be they all,
They and their city, utterly destroyed,
Uncared for, and from memory blotted out.”

Thus as he spoke, his counsel, fraught with death, 75
His brother's purpose changed: he with his hand
Adrastus thrust aside, whom with his lance
Fierce Agamemnon through the loins transfixed;
And, as he rolled in death, upon his breast
Planting his foot, the ashen spear withdrew. 80

Then loudly Nestor shouted to the Greeks:
“Friends, Grecian heroes, ministers of Mars!
Loiter not now behind, to throw yourselves

Upon the prey, and bear it to the ships;
Let all your aim be now to kill; anon 85
Ye may at leisure spoil your slaughtered foes."

With words like these he fired the blood of all.
Now had the Trojans by the warlike Greeks
In coward flight within their walls been driven;
But to Æneas and to Hector thus 90
The son of Priam, Helenus, the best
Of all the Trojan seers, addressed his speech :
" Æneas, and thou Hector, since on you,
Of all the Trojans and the Lycian hosts,
Is laid the heaviest burthen, for that ye 95
Excel alike in council and in fight,
Stand here awhile, and moving to and fro
On every side, around the gates exhort
The troops to rally, lest they fall disgraced,
Flying for safety to their women's arms, 100
And foes, exulting, triumph in their shame.
Their courage thus restored, worn as we are,
We with the Greeks will still maintain the fight,
For so, perforce, we must; but, Hector, thou
Haste to the city; there our mother find, 105

Both thine and mine; on Ilium's topmost height
By all the aged dames accompanied,
Bid her the shrine of blue-eyed Pallas seek;
Unlock the sacred gates; and on the knees
Of fair-haired Pallas place the fairest robe 110
In all the house, the amplest, best esteemed;
And at her altar vow to sacrifice
Twelve yearling kine that never felt the goad,
So she have pity on the Trojan state,
Our wives, and helpless babes, and turn away 115
The fiery son of Tydeus, spearman fierce,
The Minister of Terror; bravest he,
In my esteem, of all the Grecian chiefs;
For not Achilles' self, the prince of men,
Though Goddess-born, such dread inspired; so fierce 120
His rage; and with his prowess none may vie."

He said, nor uncomplying, Hector heard
His brother's counsel; from his car he leaped
In arms upon the plain; and brandished high
His javelins keen, and moving to and fro 125
The troops encouraged, and restored the fight.
Rallying they turned, and faced again the Greeks:

These ceased from slaughter, and in turn gave way,
Deeming that from the starry Heaven some God
Had to the rescue come; so fierce they turned. 130
Then to the Trojans Hector called aloud:

“Ye valiant Trojans, and renowned Allies,
Quit you like men; remember now, brave friends,
Your wonted valour; I to Ilium go
To bid our wives and reverend Elders raise 135
To Heaven their prayers, with vows of hecatombs.”

Thus saying, Hector of the glancing helm
Turned to depart; and as he moved along,
The black bull's-hide his neck and ancles smote,
The outer circle of his bossy shield. 140

Then Tydeus' son, and Glaucus, in the midst,
Son of Hippolochus, stood forth to fight;
But when they near were met, to Glaucus first
The valiant Diomed his speech addressed:
“Who art thou, boldest man of mortal birth? 145
For in the glorious conflict heretofore
I ne'er have seen thee; but in daring now
Thou far surpasses all, who hast not feared
To face my spear; of most unhappy sires

The children they, who my encounter meet. 150

But if from Heaven thou com'st, and art indeed

A God, I fight not with the heavenly powers.

Not long did Dryas' son, Lycurgus brave,

Survive, who dared the Immortals to defy:

He, 'mid their frantic orgies, in the groves 155

Of lovely Nyssa, put to shameful rout

The youthful Bacchus' nurses; they, in fear,

Dropped each her thyrsus, scattered by the hand

Of fierce Lycurgus, with an ox-goad armed.

Bacchus himself beneath the ocean wave 160

In terror plunged, and, trembling, refuge found

In Thetis' bosom from a mortal's threats:

The Gods indignant saw, and Saturn's son

Smote him with blindness; nor survived he long,

Hated alike by all the immortal Gods. 165

I dare not then the blessed Gods oppose;

But be thou mortal, and the fruits of earth

Thy food, approach, and quickly meet thy doom."

To whom the noble Glaucus thus replied:

"Great son of Tydeus, why my race enquire? 170

The race of man is as the race of leaves:

Of leaves, one generation by the wind
Is scattered on the earth; another soon
In spring's luxuriant verdure bursts to light.
So with our race; these flourish, those decay. 175
But if thou wouldst in truth enquire and learn
The race I spring from, not unknown of men;
There is a city, in the deep recess
Of pastoral Argos, Ephyre by name:
There Sisyphus of old his dwelling had, 180
Of mortal men the craftiest; Sisyphus,
The son of Æolus; to him was born
Glaucus; and Glaucus in his turn begot
Bellerophon, on whom the Gods bestowed
The gifts of beauty and of manly grace. 185
But Proetus sought his death; and, mightier far,
From all the coasts of Argos drove him forth,
To Proetus subjected by Jove's decree.
For him the monarch's wife, Antæa, nursed
A maddening passion, and to guilty love 190
Would fain have tempted him; but failed to move
The upright soul of chaste Bellerophon.
With lying words she then addressed the King:

‘Die, Prætus, thou, or slay Bellerophon,
Who basely sought my honour to assail.’ 195
The King with anger listened to her words;
Slay him he would not; that his soul abhorred;
But to the father of his wife, the King
Of Lycia, sent him forth, with tokens charged
Of dire import, on folded tablets traced, 200
Poisoning the monarch’s mind, to work his death.
To Lycia, guarded by the Gods, he went;
But when he came to Lycia, and the streams
Of Xanthus, there with hospitable rites
The King of wide-spread Lycia welcomed him. 205
Nine days he feasted him, nine oxen slew;
But with the tenth return of rosy morn
He questioned him, and for the tokens asked
He from his son-in-law, from Prætus, bore.
The tokens’ fatal import understood, 210
He bade him first the dread Chimæra slay;
A monster, sent from Heaven, not human born,
With head of lion, and a serpent’s tail,
And body of a goat; and from her mouth
There issued flames of fiercely-burning fire: 215

Yet her, confiding in the Gods, he slew.
Next, with the valiant Solymi he fought,
The fiercest fight that e'er he undertook.
Thirdly, the women-warriors he o'erthrew,
The Amazons; from whom returning home, 220
The King another stratagem devised;
For, choosing out the best of Lycia's sons,
He set an ambush; they returned not home,
For all by brave Bellerophon were slain.
But, by his valour when the King perceived 225
His heavenly birth, he entertained him well;
Gave him his daughter; and with her the half
Of all his royal honours he bestowed:
A portion too the Lycians meted out,
Fertile in corn and wine, of all the state 230
The choicest land, to be his heritage.
Three children there to brave Bellerophon
Were born; Isander, and Hippolochus,
Laodamia last, beloved of Jove,
The Lord of counsel; and to him she bore 235
Godlike Sarpedon of the brazen helm.
Bellerophon at length the wrath incurred

Of all the Gods; and to the Aleian plain
Alone he wandered; there he wore away
His soul, and shunned the busy haunts of men. 240
Insatiate Mars his son Isander slew
In battle with the valiant Solymi:
His daughter perished by Diana's wrath.
I from Hippolochus my birth derive:
To Troy he sent me, and enjoined me oft 245
To aim at highest honours, and surpass
My comrades all; nor on my father's name
Discredit bring, who held the foremost place
In Ephyre, and Lycia's wide domain.
Such is my race, and such the blood I boast." 250
He said; and Diomed rejoicing heard:
His spear he planted in the fruitful ground,
And thus with friendly words the chief addressed:
"By ancient ties of friendship are we bound;
For godlike Ceneus in his house received 255
For twenty days the brave Bellerophon;
They many a gift of friendship interchanged:
A belt, with crimson glowing, Ceneus gave;
Bellerophon a double cup of gold,

Which in my house I left when here I came. 260
Of Tydeus no remembrance I retain;
For yet a child he left me, when he fell
With his Achaians at the gate of Thebes.
So I in Argos am thy friendly host;
Thou mine in Lycia, when I thither come: 265
Then shun we, e'en amid the thickest fight,
Each other's lance; enough there are for me
Of Trojans and their brave allies to kill,
As Heaven may aid me, and my speed of foot;
And Greeks enough there are for thee to slay, 270
If so indeed thou canst; but let us now
Our armour interchange, that these may know
What friendly bonds of old our houses join."
Thus as they spoke, they quitted each his car;
Clasped hand in hand, and plighted mutual faith. 275
Then Glaucus of his judgment Jove deprived,
His armour interchanging, gold for brass,
A hundred oxen's worth for that of nine.

Meanwhile, when Hector reached the oak beside
The Scæan gate, around him thronged the wives 280
Of Troy, and daughters, anxious to enquire

The fate of children, brothers, husbands, friends ;
He to the Gods exhorted all to pray,
For deep the sorrows that o'er many hung.
But when to Priam's splendid house he came, 285
With polished corridors adorned—within
Were fifty chambers, all of polished stone,
Placed each by other ; there the fifty sons
Of Priam with their wedded wives reposed ;
On the other side, within the court were built 290
Twelve chambers, near the roof, of polished stone,
Placed each by other ; there the sons-in-law
Of Priam with their spouses chaste reposed ;
To meet him there his tender mother came,
And with her led the young Laodice, 295
Fairest of all her daughters ; clasping then
His hand, she thus addressed him : “ Why, my son,
Why com'st thou here, and leav'st the battle-field ?
Are Trojans by those hateful sons of Greece,
Fighting around the city, sorely pressed ? 300
And com'st thou, by thy spirit moved, to raise,
On Ilium's heights, thy hands in prayer to Jove ?
But tarry till I bring the luscious wine,

That first to Jove, and to the Immortals all,
Thou mayst thine offering pour; then with the draught 305
Thyself thou mayst refresh; for great the strength
Which generous wine imparts to men who toil,
As thou hast toiled, thy comrades to protect."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
"No, not for me, mine honoured mother, pour 310
The luscious wine, lest thou unnerve my limbs,
And make me all my wonted prowess lose.
The ruddy wine I dare not pour to Jove
With hands unwashed; nor to the cloud-girt son
Of Saturn may the voice of prayer ascend 315
From one with blood bespattered and defiled.
Thou, with the elder women, seek the shrine
Of Pallas; bring your gifts; and on the knees
Of fair-haired Pallas place the fairest robe
In all the house, the amplest, best esteemed; 320
And at her altar vow to sacrifice
Twelve yearling kine, that never felt the goad;
So she have pity on the Trojan state,
Our wives, and helpless babes; and turn away
The fiery son of Tydeus, spearman fierce, 325

The Minister of Terror; to the shrine
Of Pallas thou; to Paris I, to call
If haply he will hear; would that the earth
Would gape and swallow him! for great the curse
That Jove through him hath brought on men of Troy, 330
On noble Priam, and on Priam's sons.
Could I but know that he were in his grave,
Methinks my sorrows I could half forget."

He said: she, to the house returning, sent
The attendants through the city, to collect 335
The train of aged suppliants; she meanwhile
Her fragrant chamber sought, wherein were stored
Rich garments, by Sidonian women worked,
Whom godlike Paris had from Sidon brought,
Sailing the broad sea o'er, the selfsame path 340
By which the high-born Helen he conveyed.
Of these, the richest in embroidery,
The amplest, and the brightest, as a star
Refulgent, placed with care beneath the rest,
The Queen her offering bore to Pallas' shrine: 345
She went, and with her many an ancient dame.
But when the shrine they reached on Ilium's height,

Theano, fair of face, the gates unlocked,
Daughter of Cisseus, sage Antenor's wife,
By Trojans named at Pallas' shrine to serve. 350
They with deep moans to Pallas raised their hands;
But fair Theano took the robe, and placed
On Pallas' knees, and to the heavenly Maid,
Daughter of Jove, she thus addressed her prayer:
"Guardian of cities, Pallas, awful Queen, 355
Goddess of Goddesses, break thou the spear
Of Tydeus' son; and grant that he himself
Prostrate before the Scæan gates may fall;
So at thine altar will we sacrifice
Twelve yearling kine, that never felt the goad, 360
If thou have pity on the state of Troy,
The wives of Trojans, and their helpless babes."
Thus she; but Pallas answered not her prayer.
While thus they called upon the heavenly Maid,
Hector to Paris' mansion bent his way; 365
A noble structure, which himself had built
Aided by all the best artificers
Who in the fertile realm of Troy were known;
With chambers, hall, and court, on Ilium's height,

Near to where Priam's self and Hector dwelt. 370
There entered Hector, well beloved of Jove ;
And in his hand his ponderous spear he bore,
Twelve cubits long ; bright flashed the weapon's point
Of polished brass, with circling hoop of gold.
There in his chamber found he whom he sought, 375
About his armour busied, polishing
His shield, his breastplate, and his bended bow.
While Argive Helen, 'mid her maidens placed,
The skilful labours of their hands o'erlooked.
To him thus Hector with reproachful words ; 380
"Thou dost not well thine anger to indulge ;
In battle round the city's lofty wall
The people fast are falling ; thou the cause
That fiercely thus around the city burns
The flame of war and battle ; and thyself 385
Wouldst others blame, who from the fight should shrink.
Up, ere the town be wrapped in hostile fires."
To whom in answer godlike Paris thus :
"Hector, I own not causeless thy rebuke ;
Yet will I speak ; hear thou and understand ; 390
'Twas less from anger with the Trojan host,

And fierce resentment, that I here remained,
Than that I sought my sorrow to indulge;
Yet hath my wife, e'en now, with soothing words
Urged me to join the battle; so, I own, 395
'Twere best; and Victory changes oft her side.
Then stay, while I my armour don; or thou
Go first: I, following, will o'ertake thee soon."

He said: but Hector of the glancing helm
Made answer none; then thus with gentle tones 400
Helen accosted him: "Dear brother mine,
(Of me, degraded, sorrow-bringing, vile!)
Oh that the day my mother gave me birth
Some storm had on the mountains cast me forth!
Or that the many-dashing ocean's waves 405
Had swept me off, ere all this woe were wrought!
Yet if these evils were of Heaven ordained,
Would that a better man had call'd me wife;
A sounder judge of honour and disgrace:
For he, thou know'st, no firmness hath of mind, 410
Nor ever will; a want he well may rue.
But come thou in, and rest thee here awhile,
Dear brother, on this couch; for travail sore

Encompasseth thy soul, by me imposed,
Degraded as I am, and Paris' guilt; 415
On whom this burthen Heaven hath laid, that shame
On both our names through years to come shall rest."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
"Though kind thy wish, yet, Helen, ask me not
To sit or rest; I cannot yield to thee: 420
For to the succour of our friends I haste,
Who feel my loss, and sorely need my aid.
But thou thy husband rouse, and let him speed,
That he may find me still within the walls.
For I too homeward go; to see once more 425
My household, and my wife, and infant child:
For whether I may e'er again return,
I know not, or if Heaven have so decreed,
That I this day by Grecian hands should fall."

Thus saying, Hector of the glancing helm 430
Turned to depart; with rapid step he reached
His own well-furnished house, but found not there
His white-armed spouse, the fair Andromache.
She with her infant child and maid the while
Was standing, bathed in tears, in bitter grief, 435

On Ilium's topmost tower: but when her Lord
Found not within the house his peerless wife,
Upon the threshold pausing, thus he spoke:
"Tell me, my maidens, tell me true, which way
Your mistress went, the fair Andromache; 440
Or to my sisters, or my brothers' wives?
Or to the temple where the fair-haired dames
Of Troy invoke Minerva's awful name?"

To whom the matron of his house replied:
"Hector, if truly we must answer thee, 445
Not to thy sisters, nor thy brothers' wives,
Nor to the temple where the fair-haired dames
Of Troy invoke Minerva's awful name,
But to the height of Ilium's topmost tower
Andromache is gone; since tidings came 450
The Trojan force was overmatched, and great
The Grecian strength; whereat, like one distract,
She hurried to the walls, and with her took,
Borne in the nurse's arms, her infant child."

So spoke the ancient dame; and Hector straight 455
Through the wide streets his rapid steps retraced.
But when at last the mighty city's length

Was traversed, and the Scæan gates were reached,
Whence was the outlet to the plain, in haste
Running to meet him came his priceless wife, 460
Eëtion's daughter, fair Andromache;
Eëtion, who from Thebes Cilicia swayed,
Thebes, at the foot of Placos' wooded heights.
His child to Hector of the brazen helm
Was given in marriage: she it was who now 465
Met him, and by her side the nurse, who bore,
Clasped to her breast, his all unconscious child,
Hector's loved infant, fair as morning star;
Whom Hector called Scamandrius, but the rest
Astyanax, in honour of his sire, 470
The matchless chief, the only prop of Troy.
Silent he smiled as on his boy he gazed:
But at his side Andromache, in tears,
Hung on his arm, and thus the chief addressed:
"Dear Lord, thy dauntless spirit will work thy doom: 475
Nor hast thou pity on this thy helpless child,
Or me forlorn, to be thy widow soon:
For thee will all the Greeks with force combined
Assail and slay: for me, 'twere better far,

Of thee bereft, to lie beneath the sod ; 480
Nor comfort shall be mine, if thou be lost,
But endless grief ; to me nor sire is left,
Nor honoured mother ; fell Achilles' hand
My sire Eëtion slew, what time his arms
The populous city of Cilicia razed, 485
The lofty-gated Thebes ; he slew indeed,
But stripped him not ; he revered the dead ;
And o'er his body, with his armour burnt,
A mound erected ; and the mountain nymphs,
The progeny of ægis-bearing Jove, 490
Planted around his tomb a grove of elms.
There were seven brethren in my father's house ;
All in one day they fell, amid their herds
And fleecy flocks, by fierce Achilles' hand.
My mother, Queen of Placos' wooded height, 495
Brought with the captives here, he soon released
For costly ransom ; but by Dian's shafts
She, in her father's house, was stricken down.
But, Hector, thou to me art all in one,
Sire, mother, brethren ! thou, my wedded love ! 500
Then pitying us, within the tower remain,

Nor make thy child an orphan, and thy wife
A hapless widow ; by the fig-tree here
Array thy troops ; for here the city wall,
Easiest of access, most invites assault. 505
Thrice have their boldest chiefs this point assailed,
The two Ajaces, brave Idomeneus,
The Atridæ both, and Tydeus' warlike son,
Or by the prompting of some Heaven-taught seer,
Or by their own adventurous courage led." 510

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm :
" Think not, dear wife, that by such thoughts as these
My heart has ne'er been wrung ; but I should blush
To face the men and long-robed dames of Troy,
If, like a coward, I could shun the fight. 515
Nor could my soul the lessons of my youth
So far forget, whose boast it still has been
In the fore-front of battle to be found,
Charged with my father's glory and mine own.
Yet in my inmost soul too well I know, 520
The day must come when this our sacred Troy,
And Priam's race, and Priam's royal self,
Shall in one common ruin be o'erthrown.

But not the thoughts of Troy's impending fate,
Nor Hecuba's nor royal Priam's woes, 525
Nor loss of brethren, numerous and brave,
By hostile hands laid prostrate in the dust,
So deeply wring my heart as thoughts of thee,
Thy days of freedom lost, and led away
A weeping captive by some brass-clad Greek; 530
Haply in Argos, at a mistress' beck,
Condemned to ply the loom, or water draw
From Hypereia's or Messëis' fount,
Heart-wrung, by stern necessity constrained.
Then they who see thy tears perchance may say, 535
'Lo! this was Hector's wife, who, when they fought
On plains of Troy, was Ilium's bravest chief.'
Thus may they speak; and thus thy grief renew
For loss of him, who might have been thy shield
To rescue thee from slavery's bitter hour. 540
Oh may I sleep in dust, ere be condemned
To hear thy cries, and see thee dragged away!"
Thus as he spoke, great Hector stretched his arms
To take his child; but back the infant shrank,
Crying, and sought his nurse's sheltering breast, 545

Scared by the brazen helm and horse-hair plume,
That nodded, fearful, on the warrior's crest.
Laughed the fond parents both, and from his brow
Hector the casque removed, and set it down,
All glittering, on the ground; then kissed his child, 550
And danced him in his arms; then thus to Jove
And to the Immortals all addressed his prayer:
"Grant, Jove, and all ye Gods, that this my son
May be, as I, the foremost man of Troy,
For valour famed, his country's guardian King; 555
That men may say, 'This youth surpasses far
His father,' when they see him from the fight,
From slaughtered foes, with bloody spoils of war
Returning, to rejoice his mother's heart!"

Thus saying, in his mother's arms he placed 560
His child; she to her fragrant bosom clasped,
Smiling through tears; with eyes of pitying love
Hector beheld, and pressed her hand, and thus
Addressed her—"Dearest, wring not thus my heart!
For till my day of destiny is come, 565
No man may take my life; and when it comes,
Nor brave nor coward can escape that day.

But go thou home, and ply thy household cares,
The loom and distaff, and appoint thy maids
Their several tasks; and leave to men of Troy 570
And, chief of all to me, the toils of war."

Great Hector said, and raised his plumèd helm;
And homeward, slow, with oft-reverted eyes,
Shedding hot tears, his sorrowing wife returned.
Arrived at valiant Hector's well-built house, 575
Her maidens pressed around her; and in all
Arose at once the sympathetic grief.
For Hector, yet alive, his household mourned,
Deeming he never would again return,
Safe from the fight, by Grecian hands unharmed. 580

Nor lingered Paris in his lofty halls;
But donned his armour, glittering o'er with brass,
And through the city passed with bounding steps.
As some proud steed, at well-filled manger fed,
His halter broken, neighing, scours the plain, 585
And revels in the widely-flowing stream
To bathe his sides; then tossing high his head,
While o'er his shoulders streams his ample mane,
Light borne on active limbs, in conscious pride,

To the wide pastures of the mares he flies ; 590

So Paris, Priam's son, from Ilium's height,

His bright arms flashing like the gorgeous sun,

Hastened, with boastful mien, and rapid step.

Hector he found, as from the spot he turned

Where with his wife he late had converse held ; 595

Whom thus the godlike Paris first addressed :

" Too long, good brother, art thou here detained,

Impatient for the fight, by my delay ;

Nor have I timely, as thou bad'st me, come."

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm : 600

" My gallant brother, none who thinks aright

Can cavil at thy prowess in the field ;

For thou art very valiant ; but thy will

Is weak and sluggish ; and it grieves my heart,

When from the Trojans, who on thy behalf 605

Such labours undergo, I hear thy name

Coupled with foul reproach ! But go we now !

Henceforth shall all be well, if Jove permit

That from our shores we chase the invading Greeks,

And to the ever-living Gods of Heaven

In peaceful homes our free libations pour." 611

BOOK VII.

THUS as he spoke, from out the city gates
The noble Hector passed, and by his side
His brother Paris; in the breast of both
Burnt the fierce ardour of the battle-field.
As when some God a favoring breeze bestows 5
On seamen tugging at the well-worn oar,
Faint with excess of toil, e'en so appeared
Those brethren twain to Troy's o'erlaboured host.
Then to their prowess fell, by Paris' hand
Menesthius, royal Arëithōus' son, 10
Whom to the King, in Arna, where he dwelt,
The stag-eyed dame Phylomedusa bore;
While Hector smote, with well-directed spear,
Beneath the brass-bound headpiece, through the throat,
Eioneus, and slacked his limbs in death; 15
And Glaucus, leader of the Lycian bands,

Son of Hippolochus, amid the fray
Iphinōus, son of Dexias, borne on high
By two fleet mares upon a lofty car,
Pierced through the shoulder; from the car he fell 20
Prone to the earth, his limbs relaxed in death.
But them when Pallas saw, amid the fray
Dealing destruction on the hosts of Greece,
From high Olympus to the walls of Troy
She came in haste; Apollo there she found, 25
As down he looked from Ilium's topmost tower,
Devising victory to the arms of Troy.
Beside the oak they met; Apollo first,
The son of Jove, the colloquy began:
"Daughter of Jove, from great Olympus' heights, 30
Why com'st thou here, by angry passion led?
Wouldst thou the victory, swaying here and there,
Give to the Greeks? since pitiless thou see'st
The Trojans slaughtered? Be advised by me,
For so 'twere better; cause we for to-day 35
The rage of battle and of war to cease;
To-morrow morn shall see the fight renewed,
Until the close of Ilium's destiny;

For so ye Goddesses have wrought your will,
That this fair city should in ruin fall." 40

To whom the blue-eyed Goddess thus replied :
" So be it, Archer-King; with like intent
I from Olympus came; but say, what means
Wilt thou devise to bid the conflict cease?"

To whom Apollo, royal son of Jove: 45
" The might of valiant Hector let us move
To challenge to the combat, man to man,
Some Grecian warrior; while the brass-clad Greeks
Their champion urge the challenge to accept,
And godlike Hector meet in single fight." 50

He said; nor did Minerva not assent;
But Helenus, the son of Priam, knew
The secret counsel by the Gods devised;
And drawing near to Hector, thus he spoke :
" Hector, thou son of Priam, sage as Jove 55
In council, hearken to a brother's words.
Bid that the Greeks and Trojans all sit down,
And thou defy the boldest of the Greeks
With thee in single combat to contend;
By revelation from the eternal Gods, 60

I know that here thou shalt not meet thy fate."

He said, and Hector joyed to hear his words;
Forth in the midst he stepped, and with his spear
Grasped in the middle, stayed the Trojan ranks.
With one accord they sat; on the other side 65
Atreides bade the well-greaved Greeks sit down;
While, in the likeness of two vultures, sat
On the tall oak of ægis-bearing Jove,
Pallas, and Phoebus of the silver bow,
With heroes' deeds delighted; dense around 70
Bristled the ranks, with shield, and helm, and spear.
As when the west wind freshly blows, and brings
A darkening ripple o'er the ocean waves,
E'en so appeared upon the plain the ranks
Of Greeks and Trojans; standing in the midst, 75
Thus to both armies noble Hector spoke:
"Hear, all ye Trojans, and ye well-greaved Greeks,
The words I speak, the promptings of my soul.
It hath not pleased high-throned Saturnian Jove
To ratify our truce, who both afflicts 80
With labours hard, till either ye shall take
Our well-fenced city, or yourselves to us

Succumb beside your ocean-going ships.
Here have ye all the chiefest men of Greece;
Of all, let him who dares with me to fight, 85
Stand forth, and godlike Hector's might confront.
And this I say, and call to witness Jove,
If with the sharp-edged spear he vanquish me,
He shall strip off, and to the hollow ships
In triumph bear my armour; but my corpse 90
Restore, that so the men and wives of Troy
May deck with honours due my funeral pyre.
But, by Apollo's grace should I prevail,
I will his arms strip off and bear to Troy,
And in Apollo's temple hang on high; 95
But to the ships his corpse I will restore,
That so the long-haired Greeks with solemn rites
May bury him, and to his memory raise
By the broad Hellespont a lofty tomb;
And men in days to come shall say, who urge 100
Their full-oared bark across the dark-blue sea,
'Lo there a warrior's tomb of days gone by,
A mighty chief, whom glorious Hector slew :'
Thus shall they say, and thus my fame shall live."

Thus Hector spoke; they all in silence heard, 105
Shamed to refuse, but fearful to accept.
At length in anger Menelāus rose,
Groaning in spirit, and with bitter words
Reproached them: "Shame, ye braggart cowards, shame!
Women of Greece! I cannot call you men! 110
'Twere foul disgrace indeed, and scorn on scorn,
If Hector's challenge none of all the Greeks
Should dare accept; to dust and water turn
All ye who here inglorious, heartless sit!
I will myself confront him; for success, 115
The immortal Gods above the issues hold."

Thus as he spoke, he donned his dazzling arms.
Then, Menelāus, had thine end approached
By Hector's hands, so much the stronger he,
Had not the Kings withheld thee and restrained. 120
Great Agamemnon's self, wide-ruling King,
Seizing his hand, addressed him thus by name:
"What! Heaven-born Menelāus, art thou mad?
Beseems thee not such folly; curb thy wrath,
Though vexed; nor think with Hector to contend, 125
Thy better far, inspiring dread in all.

From his encounter in the glorious fight,
Superior far to thee, Achilles shrinks;
But thou amid thy comrades' ranks retire;
Some other champion will the Greeks provide; 130
And, fearless as he is, and of the fight
Insatiate, yet will Hector, should he 'scape
Unwounded from the deadly battle-strife,
Be fain, methinks, to rest his weary limbs."

He said, and with judicious counsel swayed 135
His brother's mind; he yielded to his words,
And gladly his attendants doffed his arms.

Then Nestor rose, and thus addressed the Greeks:
"Alas, alas! what shame is this for Greece!
What grief would fill the aged Peleus' soul, 140
Sage chief in council, of the Myrmidons
Leader approved, who often in his house
Would question me, and loved from me to hear
Of all the Greeks the race and pedigree,
Could he but learn how Hector cowed them all! 145
He to the Gods with hands upraised would pray
His soul might from his body be divorced,
And sink beneath the earth! Oh would to Jove,

To Pallas and Apollo, such were now
My vigorous youth, as when beside the banks 150
Of swiftly-flowing Celadon, the men
Of Pylos with the Arcadian spearmen fought,
By Pheia's walls, around Iardan's streams.
Then from the ranks, in likeness as a God,
Advanced their champion, Ereuthalion bold. 155
The arms of Arëithōus he wore:
Of godlike Arëithōus, whom men
And richly-girdled women had surnamed
The Macebearer; for not with sword or bow
He went to fight, but with an iron mace 160
Broke through the squadrons: him Lycurgus slew,
By stealth, not bravery, in a narrow way,
Where nought availed his iron mace from death
To save him; for Lycurgus, with his spear,
Preventing, thrust him through the midst; he fell 165
Prostrate; and from his breast the victor stripped
His armour off, the gift of brass-clad Mars;
And in the tug of war he wore it off;
But when Lycurgus felt the approach of age,
He to his faithful follower and friend, 170

To Ereuthalion gave it; therewith armed,
He now to combat challenged all the chiefs.
None dared accept, for fear had fallen on all;
Then I with dauntless spirit his might opposed,
The youngest of them all; with him I fought, 175
And Pallas gave the victory to my arm.
Him there I slew, the tallest, strongest man;
For many another there beside him lay.
Would that my youth and strength were now the same;
Then soon should Hector of the glancing helm 180
A willing champion find; but ye, of Greece
The foremost men, with Hector fear to fight."

The old man spoke reproachful; at his words
Up rose nine warriors: far before the rest,
The monarch Agamemnon, King of men; 185
Next Tydeus' son, the valiant Diomed;
The two Ajaces, clothed with courage high;
Idomeneus, and of Idomeneus
The faithful follower, brave Meriones,
Equal in fight to blood-stained Mars; with these 190
Eurypylus, Euæmon's noble son;
Thoas, Andræmon's son; Ulysses last:

These all with Hector offered to contend.

Then thus again Gerenian Nestor spoke :

“ Shake then the lots ; on whomsoe'er it fall, 195

Great profit shall he bring to Grecian arms,

Great glory to himself, if he escape

Unwounded from the deadly battle strife.”

He said : each marked his several lot, and all

Together threw in Agamemnon's helm. 200

The crowd, with hands uplifted, prayed the Gods,

And looking heavenward, said, “ Grant, Father Jove,

The lot on Ajax, or on Tydeus' son,

Or on Mycenæ's wealthy King may fall.”

Thus they : then aged Nestor shook the helm, 205

And forth, according to their wish, was thrown

The lot of Ajax ; then from left to right

A herald showed to all the chiefs of Greece,

In turn, the token ; they who knew it not,

Disclaimed it all ; but when to him he came 210

Who marked, and threw it in Atrides' helm,

The noble Ajax, and, approaching, placed

The token in his outstretched hand, forthwith

He knew it, and rejoiced ; before his feet

He threw it down upon the ground, and said, 215
" O friends, the lot is mine ; great is my joy,
And hope o'er godlike Hector to prevail.
But now, while I my warlike armour don,
Pray ye to Saturn's royal son, apart,
In silence, that the Trojans hear ye not ; 220
Or even aloud, for nought have we to fear.
No man against my will can make me fly,
By greater force or skill ; nor will, I hope,
My inexperience in the field disgrace
The teaching of my native Salamis." 225

Thus he ; and they to Saturn's royal son
Addressed their prayers, and looking heavenward, said :
" O Father Jove, who rul'st on Ida's height !
Most great ! most glorious ! grant that Ajax now
May gain the victory, and immortal praise ; 230
Or if thy love and pity Hector claim,
Give equal power and equal praise to both."

Ajax meanwhile in dazzling brass was clad ;
And when his armour all was duly donned,
Forward he moved, as when gigantic Mars 235
Leads nations forth to war, whom Saturn's son

In life-destroying conflict hath involved ;
So moved the giant Ajax, prop of Greece,
With sternly smiling mien ; with haughty stride
He trod the plain, and poised his ponderous spear. 240
The Greeks, rejoicing, on their champion gazed,
The Trojans' limbs beneath them shook with fear ;
E'en Hector's heart beat quicker in his breast ;
Yet quail he must not now, nor back retreat
Amid his comrades—he, the challenger ! 245

Ajax approached ; before him, as a tower
His mighty shield he bore, seven-fold, brass-bound,
The work of Tychius, best artificer
That wrought in leather ; he in Hyla dwelt.
Of seven-fold hides the ponderous shield was wrought 250
Of lusty bulls ; the eighth was glittering brass.
This by the son of Telamon was borne
Before his breast ; to Hector close he came,
And thus with words of haughty menace spoke :

“Hector, I now shall teach thee, man to man, 255
The mettle of the chiefs we yet possess,
Although Achilles of the lion heart,
Mighty in battle, be not with us still ;

He by his ocean-going ships indeed
Against Atrides nurses still his wrath; 260
Yet are there those who dare encounter thee,
And not a few; then now begin the fight."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
"Ajax, brave leader, son of Telamon,
Deal not with me as with a feeble child, 265
Or woman, ignorant of the ways of war;
Of war and carnage every point I know;
And well I know to wield, now right, now left,
The tough bull's-hide that forms my stubborn targe:
Well know I too my fiery steeds to urge, 270
And raise the war-cry in the standing fight.
But not in secret ambush would I watch,
To strike, by stealth, a noble foe like thee;
But slay thee, if I may, in open fight."

He said; and, poising, hurled his ponderous spear; 275
The brazen covering of the shield it struck,
The outward fold, the eighth, above the seven
Of tough bull's-hide; through six it drove its way
With stubborn force; but in the seventh was stayed.
Then Ajax hurled in turn his ponderous spear, 280

And struck the circle true of Hector's shield :
Right through the glittering shield the stout spear passed,
And through the well-wrought breastplate drove its way ;
And, underneath, the linen vest it tore ;
But Hector, stooping, shunned the stroke of death. 285
Withdrawing then their weapons, each on each
They fell, like lions fierce, or tuskèd boars,
In strength the mightiest of the forest beasts.
Then Hector fairly on the centre struck
The stubborn shield; yet drove not through the spear ; 290
For the stout brass the blunted point repelled.
But Ajax, with a forward bound, the shield
Of Hector pierced ; right through the weapon passed ;
Arrested with rude shock the warrior's course,
And grazed his neck, that spouted forth the blood. 295
Yet did not Hector of the glancing helm
Flinch from the contest: stooping to the ground,
With his broad hand a ponderous stone he seized,
That lay upon the plain, dark, jagged, and huge,
And hurled against the seven-fold shield, and struck 300
Full on the central boss; loud rang the brass :
Then Ajax raised a weightier mass of rock

And sent it whirling, giving to his arm
Unmeasured impulse; with a millstone's weight
It crushed the buckler; Hector's knees gave way; 305
Backward he staggered, yet upon his shield
Sustained, till Phœbus raised him to his feet.
Now had they hand to hand with swords engaged,
Had not the messengers of Gods and men,
The heralds, interposed; the one for Troy, 310
The other umpire for the brass-clad Greeks,
Talthybius and Idæus, well approved.
Between the chiefs they held their wands, and thus
Idæus both with prudent speech addressed:
"No more, brave youths! no longer wage the fight: 315
To cloud-compelling Jove ye both are dear,
Both valiant spearmen; that, we all have seen.
Night is at hand; behoves us yield to night."

Whom answered thus the son of Telamon:
"Idæus, bid that Hector speak those words: 320
He challenged all our chiefs; let him begin:
If he be willing, I shall not refuse."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
"Ajax, since God hath given thee size, and strength,

And skill; and with the spear, of all the Greeks 325
None is thine equal; cease we for to-day
The fight; hereafter we may meet, and Heaven
Decide our cause, and one with victory crown.
Night is at hand; behoves us yield to night.
So by the ships shalt thou rejoice the Greeks, 330
And most of all, thy comrades and thy friends;
And so shall I, in Priam's royal town,
Rejoice the men of Troy, and long-robed dames,
Who shall with grateful prayers the temples throng.
But make we now an interchange of gifts, 335
That both the Trojans and the Greeks may say,
'On mortal quarrel did those warriors meet,
Yet parted thence in friendly bonds conjoined.'"
This said, a silver-studded sword he gave,
With scabbard and with well-cut belt complete; 340
Ajax a girdle, rich with crimson dye.
They parted; Ajax to the Grecian camp,
And Hector to the ranks of Troy returned:
Great was the joy when him they saw approach,
Alive and safe; escaped from Ajax' might 345
And arm invincible; and toward the town

They led him back, beyond their hope preserved ;
While to Atrides' tent the well-greaved Greeks
Led Ajax, glorying in his triumph gained.

But when to Agamemnon's tents they came, 350
The King of men to Saturn's royal son
A bullock slew, a male of five years old ;
The carcase then they flayed ; and cutting up,
Severed the joints ; then fixing on the spits,
Roasted with care, and from the fire withdrew. 355
Their labours ended, and the feast prepared,
They shared the social meal, nor lacked there aught.
To Ajax then the chine's continuous length,
As honour's meed, the mighty monarch gave.
The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied, 360
The aged Nestor first his mind disclosed ;
He who, before, the sagest counsel gave,
Now thus with prudent speech began, and said :
" Atrides, and ye other chiefs of Greece,
Since many a long-haired Greek hath fallen in fight, 365
Whose blood, beside Scamander's flowing stream,
Fierce Mars has shed, while to the viewless shades
Their spirits are gone, behoves thee with the morn

The warfare of the Greeks to intermit :

Then we, with oxen and with mules, the dead 370

From all the plain will draw ; and, from the ships

A little space removed, will burn with fire :

That we, returning to our native land,

May to their children bear our comrades' bones.

Then will we go, and on the plain erect 375

Around the pyre one common mound for all ;

Then quickly build before it lofty towers

To screen both ships and men ; and in the towers

Make ample portals, with well-fitting gates,

That through the midst a carriage-way may pass : 380

And a deep trench around it dig, to guard

Both men and chariots, lest on our defence

The haughty Trojans should too hardly press."

He said ; and all the Kings his words approved.

Meanwhile, on Ilium's height, at Priam's gate, 385

The Trojan chiefs a troubled council held ;

Which opening, thus the sage Antenor spoke :

"Hear now, ye Trojans, Dardans, and Allies,

The words I speak, the promptings of my soul.

Back to the sons of Atreus let us give 390

The Argive Helen, and the goods she brought;
For now in breach of plighted faith we fight;
Nor can I hope, unless to my advice
Ye listen, that success will crown our arms.”
Thus having said, he sat; and next arose 395
The godlike Paris, fair-haired Helen's Lord;
Who thus with wingèd words the chiefs addressed:
“Hostile to me, Antenor, is thy speech;
Thy better judgment better counsel knows;
But if in earnest such is thine advice, 400
Thee of thy senses have the Gods bereft.
Now, Trojans, hear my answer; I reject
The counsel, nor the woman will restore;
But for the goods, whate'er I hither brought
To Troy from Argos, I am well content 405
To give them all, and others add beside.”

This said, he sat; and aged Priam next,
A God in council, Dardan's son, arose,
Who thus with prudent speech began, and said:
“Hear now, ye Trojans, Dardans, and Allies. 410
The words I speak, the promptings of my soul:
Now through the city take your wonted meal;

Look to your watch, let each man keep his guard :
To-morrow shall Idæus to the ships
Of Greece, to both the sons of Atreus, bear 415
The words of Paris, cause of all this war ;
And ask besides, if from the deadly strife
Such truce they will accord us as may serve
To burn the dead : hereafter we may fight
Till Heaven decide, and one with victory crown." 420 .

He said ; and they, obedient to his word,
Throughout the ranks prepared the wonted meal :
But with the morning to the ships of Greece
Idæus took his way : in council there
By Agamemnon's leading ship he found 425
The Grecian chiefs, the ministers of Mars :
And 'mid them all the clear-voiced herald spoke :

"Ye sons of Atreus, and ye chiefs of Greece,
From Priam, and the gallant sons of Troy,
I come, to bear, if ye be pleased to hear, 430
The words of Paris, cause of all this war :
The goods which hither in his hollow ships
(Would he had perished rather !) Paris brought,
He will restore, and others add beside ;

But further says, the virgin-wedded wife 435

Of Menelāus, though the general voice

Of Troy should bid him, he will not restore :

Then bids me ask, if from the deadly strife

Such truce ye will accord us as may serve

To burn the dead : hereafter we may fight 440

Till Heaven decide, and one with victory crown."

Thus he : they all in silence heard ; at length

Uprose the valiant Diomed, and said ;

"Let none from Paris now propose to accept

Or goods, or Helen's self ; a child may see 445

That now the doom of Troy is close at hand."

He said ; the sons of Greece, with loud applause,

The speech of valiant Diomed confirmed.

Then to Idæus Agamemnon thus :

"Idæus, thou hast heard what answer give 450

The chiefs of Greece—their answer I approve.

But for the truce, for burial of the dead,

I nought demur ; no shame it is to grace

With funeral rites the corpse of slaughtered foes.

Be witness, Jove ! and guard the plighted truce." 455

He said ; and heavenward raised his staff ; and back

To Ilium's walls Idæus took his way.
Trojans and Dardans there in council met
Expecting sat, till from the Grecian camp
Idæus should return; he came, and stood 460
In mid assembly, and his message gave:
Then all in haste their several ways dispersed,
For fuel some, and some to bring the dead.
The Greeks too from their well-manned ships went forth,
For fuel some, and some to bring the dead. 465
The sun was newly glancing on the earth,
From out the ocean's smoothly-flowing depths
Climbing the Heavens, when on the plain they met.
Hard was it then to recognize the dead;
But when the gory dust was washed away, 470
Shedding hot tears, they placed them on the wains.
Nor loud lament, by Priam's high command,
Was heard; in silence they, with grief suppressed,
Heaped up their dead upon the funeral pyre;
Then burnt with fire, and back returned to Troy. 475
The well-greaved Greeks, they too, with grief suppressed,
Heaped up their dead upon the funeral pyre;
Then burnt with fire, and to the ships returned.

But ere 'twas morn, while daylight strove with night,
About the pyre a chosen band of Greeks 480
Had kept their vigil, and around it raised
Upon the plain one common mound for all;
And built in front a wall, with lofty towers
To screen both ships and men; and in the towers
Made ample portals with well-fitting gates, 485
That through the midst a carriage-way might pass:
Then dug a trench around it, deep and wide,
And in the trench a palisade they fixed.

Thus laboured through the night the long-haired Greeks:
The Gods, assembled in the courts of Jove, 490
With wonder viewed the mighty work; and thus
Neptune, Earth-shaking King, his speech began:
"O Father Jove, in all the wide-spread earth
Shall men be found, in counsel and design
To rival us Immortals? see'st thou not 495
How round their ships the long-haired Greeks have built
A lofty wall, and dug a trench around,
Nor to the Gods have paid their offerings due?
Wide as the light extends shall be the fame
Of this great work, and men shall lightly deem 500

Of that which I and Phœbus jointly raised,
With toil and pain, for great Læomedon."

To whom in wrath the Cloud-compeller thus:
"Neptune, Earth-shaking King, what words are these?
This bold design to others of the Gods, 505
Of feebler hands, and power less great than thine,
Might cause alarm; but, far as light extends,
Of this great work to thee shall be the fame:
When with their ships the long-haired Greeks shall take
Their homeward voyage to their native land, 510
This wall shall by the waves be broken through,
And sink, a shapeless ruin, in the sea:
O'er the wide shore again thy sands shall spread,
And all the boasted work of Greece o'erwhelm."

Amid themselves such converse held the Gods. 515
The sun was set; the Grecian work was done;
They slew, and shared, by tents, the evening meal.
From Lemnos' isle a numerous fleet had come
Freighted with wine; and by Eunæus sent,
Whom fair Hypsipyle to Jason bore. 520
For Atreus' sons, apart from all the rest,
Of wine, the son of Jason had despatched

A thousand measures ; all the other Greeks
Hastened to purchase, some with brass, and some
With gleaming iron ; other some with hides, 525
Cattle, or slaves ; and joyous waxed the feast.
All night the long-haired Greeks their revels held,
And so in Troy, the Trojans and Allies :
But through the night his anger Jove expressed
With awful thunderings ; pale they turned with fear : 530
To earth the wine was from the goblets shed,
Nor dared they drink, until libations due
Had first been poured to Saturn's mighty son.
Then lay they down, and sought the boon of sleep. 534

BOOK VIII

NOW morn, in saffron robe, the earth o'erspread;
And Jove, the lightning's Lord, of all the Gods
A council held upon the highest peak
Of many-ridged Olympus; he himself
Addressed them; they his speech attentive heard. 5
"Hear, all ye Gods, and all ye Goddesses,
The words I speak, the promptings of my soul.
Let none among you, male or female, dare
To thwart my counsels: rather all concur,
That so these matters I may soon conclude. 10
If, from the rest apart, one God I find
Presuming or to Trojans or to Greeks
To give his aid, with ignominious stripes
Back to Olympus shall that God be driven;
Or to the gloom of Tartarus profound, 15
Far off, the lowest abyss beneath the earth,

With gates of iron, and with floor of brass,
Beneath the shades as far as earth from Heaven,
There will I hurl him, and ye all shall know
In strength how greatly I surpass you all. 20
Make trial if ye will, that all may know.
A golden cord let down from Heaven, and all,
Both Gods and Goddesses, your strength apply :
Yet would ye fail to drag from Heaven to earth,
Strive as ye may, your mighty master, Jove ; 25
But if I choose to make my power be known,
The earth itself, and ocean, I could raise,
And binding round Olympus' ridge the cord,
Leave them suspended so in middle air :
So far supreme my power o'er Gods and men." 30
He said, and they, confounded by his words,
In silence sat ; so sternly did he speak.
At length the blue-eyed Goddess, Pallas, said :
" O Father, Son of Saturn, King of Kings,
Well do we know thy power invincible ; 35
Yet deeply grieve we for the warlike Greeks,
Condemned to hopeless ruin ; from the fight,
Since such is thy command, we stand aloof ;

But yet some saving counsel may we give,
Lest in thine anger thou destroy them quite." 40

To whom the Cloud-compeller, smiling, thus:
"Be of good cheer, my child; unwillingly
I speak, yet will not thwart thee of thy wish."

He said, and straight the brazen-footed steeds,
Of swiftest flight, with manes of flowing gold, 45
He harnessed to his chariot; all in gold
Himself arrayed, the golden lash he grasped,
Of curious work; and mounting on his car,
Urged the fleet coursers; nothing loth, they flew
Midway betwixt the earth and starry heaven. 50

To Ida's spring-abounding hill he came,
And to the crest of Gargarus, wild nurse
Of mountain beasts; a sacred plot was there,
Whereon his incense-honoured altar stood:
There stayed his steeds the Sire of Gods and men, 55
Loosed from the car, and veiled with clouds around.
Then on the topmost ridge he sat, in pride
Of conscious strength; and looking down, surveyed
The Trojan city, and the ships of Greece.

Meantime, the Greeks throughout their tents in haste 60

Despatched their meal, and armed them for the fight;
On the other side the Trojans donned their arms,
In numbers fewer, but with stern resolve,
By hard necessity constrained, to strive,
For wives and children, in the stubborn fight. 65
The gates all opened wide, forth poured the crowd
Of horse and foot; and loud the clamour rose.
When in the midst they met, together rushed
Bucklers and lances, and the furious might
Of mail-clad warriors; bossy shield on shield 70
Clattered in conflict; loud the clamour rose:
Then rose too mingled shouts and groans of men
Slaying and slain; the earth ran red with blood.
While yet 'twas morn, and waxed the youthful day,
Thick flew the shafts, and fast the people fell 75
On either side; but when the sun had reached
The middle Heaven, the Eternal Father hung
His golden scales aloft, and placed in each
The fatal death-lot: for the sons of Troy
The one, the other for the brass-clad Greeks; 80
Then held them by the midst; down sank the lot
Of Greece, down to the ground, while high aloft

Mounted the Trojan scale, and rose to Heaven.*
Then loud he bade the volleying thunder peal
From Ida's heights; and 'mid the Grecian ranks 85
He hurled his flashing lightning; at the sight
Amazed they stood, and pale with terror shook.
Then not Idomeneus, nor Atreus' son,
The mighty Agamemnon, kept their ground,
Nor either Ajax, ministers of Mars; 90
Gerenian Nestor, aged prop of Greece,
Alone remained, and he against his will,
His horse sore wounded by an arrow shot
By godlike Paris, fair-haired Helen's Lord :
Just on the crown, where close behind the head 95
First springs the mane, the deadliest spot of all,
The arrow struck him; maddened with the pain
He reared, then plunging forward, with the shaft
Fixed in his brain, and rolling in the dust,
The other steeds in dire confusion threw; 100

* See also Book xxii. l. 252.

Milton, in the corresponding passage at the close of the 4th Book of 'Paradise Lost,' reverses the sign, and represents the scale of the vanquished as "flying up" and "kicking the beam."

"The Fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft; nor more, but fled
Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night."

And while old Nestor with his sword essayed
To cut the reins, and free the struggling horse,
Amid the rout down came the flying steeds
Of Hector, guided by no timid hand,
By Hector's self; then had the old man paid 105
The forfeit of his life, but, good at need,
The valiant Diomed his peril saw,
And loudly shouting, on Ulysses called:
" Ulysses sage, Laertes' godlike son,
Why fliest thou, coward-like, amid the throng, 110
And in thy flight to the aim of hostile spears
Thy back presenting? stay, and here with me
From this fierce warrior guard the good old man."
He said; but stout Ulysses heard him not,
And to the ships pursued his hurried way. 115
But in the front, Tydides, though alone,
Remained undaunted; by old Nestor's car
He stood, and thus the aged chief addressed:
" Old man, these youthful warriors press thee sore,
Thy vigour spent, and with the weight of years 120
Oppressed; and helpless too thy charioteer,
And slow thy horses; mount my car, and prove

How swift my steeds, or in pursuit or flight,
From those of Tros descended, scour the plain;
My noble prize from great Æneas won. 125
Leave to the attendants these; while mine we launch
Against the Trojan host, that Hector's self
May know how strong my hand can hurl the spear."

He said; and Nestor his advice obeyed:
The two attendants, valiant Sthenelus, 130
And good Eurymedon, his horses took,
While on Tydides' car they mounted both.
The aged Nestor took the glittering reins,
And urged the horses; Hector soon they met:
As on he came, his spear Tydides threw, 135
Yet struck not Hector; but his charioteer,
Who held the reins, the brave Thebæus' son,
Eniopæus, through the breast transfixed,
Beside the nipple; from the car he fell,
The startled horses swerving at the sound; 140
And from his limbs the vital spirit fled.
Deep, for his comrade slain, was Hector's grief;
Yet him, though grieved, perforce he left to seek
A charioteer; nor wanted long his steeds

A guiding hand ; for Archeptolemus, 145
Brave son of Iphitus, he quickly found,
And bade him mount his swiftly-flying car,
And to his hands the glittering reins transferred.

Then fearful ruin had been wrought, and deeds
Untold achieved, and like a flock of lambs, 150
The adverse hosts been cooped beneath the walls,
Had not the Sire of Gods and men beheld,
And with an awful peal of thunder hurled
His vivid lightning down ; the fiery bolt
Before Tydides' chariot ploughed the ground. 155
Fierce flashed the sulphurous flame, and whirling round
Beneath the car the affrighted horses quailed.

From Nestor's hand escaped the glittering reins,
And, trembling, thus to Diomed he spoke :

“ Turn we to flight, Tydides ; see'st thou not, 160
That Jove from us his aiding hand withholds ?
This day to Hector Saturn's son decrees
The meed of victory ; on some future day,
If so he will, the triumph may be ours ;
For man, how brave soe'er, cannot o'errule 165
The will of Jove, so much the mightier he.”

Whom answered thus the valiant Diomed :
" Truly, old man, and wisely dost thou speak ;
But this the bitter grief that wrings my soul :
Some day, amid the councillors of Troy 170
Hector may say, ' Before my presence scared
Tydides sought the shelter of the ships.'
Thus when he boasts, gape earth, and hide my shame !"

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied :
" Great son of Tydeus, oh what words are these ! 175
Should Hector brand thee with a coward's name,
No credence would he gain from Trojan men,
Or Dardan, or from Trojan warriors' wives,
Whose husbands in the dust thy hand hath laid."

He said, and 'mid the general rout, to flight 180
He turned his horses ; on the flying crowd,
With shouts of triumph, Hector at their head,
The men of Troy their murderous weapons showered.
Loud shouted Hector of the glancing helm :

" Tydides, heretofore the warrior Greeks 185
Have held thee in much honour ; placed on high
At banquets, and with liberal portions graced,
And flowing cups : but thou, from this day forth,

Shalt be their scorn! a woman's soul is thine!
Out on thee, frightened girl! thou ne'er shalt scale 190
Our Trojan towers, and see me basely fly;
Nor in thy ships our women bear away:
Ere such thy boast, my hand shall work thy doom."

Thus he; and greatly was Tydides moved
To turn his horses, and confront his foe: 195
Thrice thus he doubted; thrice, at Jove's command,
From Ida's height the thunder pealed, in sign
Of victory swaying to the Trojan side.

Then to the Trojans Hector called aloud:
"Trojans, and Lycians, and ye Dardans, famed 200
In close encounter, quit ye now like men;
Put forth your wonted valour; for I know
That in his secret counsels Jove designs
Glory to me, disaster to the Greeks.

Fools, in those wretched walls that put their trust, 205
Scarce worthy notice, hopeless to withstand
My onset; and the trench that they have dug,
Our horses easily can overleap;
And when I reach the ships, be mindful ye,
To have at hand the fire, wherewith the ships 210

We may destroy, while they themselves shall fall
An easy prey, bewildered by the smoke."

He said, and thus with cheering words addressed
His horses: "Xanthus, and, Podargus, thou,
Æthon and Lampus, now repay the care 215
On you bestowed by fair Andromache,
Eëtion's royal daughter; bear in mind
How she with ample store of provender
Your mangers still supplied, before e'en I,
Her husband, from her hands the wine-cup took. 220
Put forth your speed, that we may make our prize
Of Nestor's shield, whose praise extends to Heaven,
Its handles, and itself, of solid gold;
And from the shoulders of Tydides strip
His gorgeous breastplate, work of Vulcan's hand: 225
These could we take, methinks this very night
Would see the Greeks embarking on their ships."

Such was his prayer; but Juno on her throne
Trembled with rage, till great Olympus quaked,
And thus to Neptune, mighty God, she spoke: 230
"O thou of boundless might, Earth-shaking God,
See'st thou unmoved the ruin of the Greeks?"

Yet they in Ægæ and in Helice,
With grateful offerings rich thine altars crown;
Then give we them the victory; if we all 235
Who favour Greece, together should combine
To put to flight the Trojans, and restrain
All-seeing Jove, he might be left alone,
On Ida's summit to digest his wrath."

To whom, in anger, Neptune thus replied: 240
" O Juno, rash of speech, what words are these !
I dare not counsel that we all should join
'Gainst Saturn's son; so much the stronger he."

Such converse held they; all the space meanwhile
Within the trench, between the tower and ships, 245
Was closely thronged with steeds and bucklered men;
By noble Hector, brave as Mars, and led
By Jove to victory, coop'd in narrow space;
Who now had burnt with fire the Grecian ships,
But Juno bade Atrides haste to rouse 250
Their fainting courage; through the camp he passed;
On his broad hand a purple robe he bore,
And stood upon Ulysses' lofty ship,
The midmost, whence to shout to either side,

Or to the tents of Ajax Telamon, 255
Or of Achilles, who at each extreme,
Confiding in their strength, had moored their ships.

Thence to the Greeks he shouted, loud and clear :
" Shame on ye, Greeks, base cowards, brave alone
In outward semblance ! where are now the vaunts 260
Which once (so highly of ourselves we deemed)
Ye made, vain-glorious braggarts as ye were,
In Lemnos' isle, when, feasting on the flesh
Of straight-horned oxen, and your flowing cups
Crowning with ruddy wine, 'not one of you, 265
But for a hundred Trojans in the field,
Or for two hundred, deemed himself a match :
Now quail ye all before a single man,
Hector, who soon will wrap our ships in fire.
O Father Jove ! what sovereign e'er hast thou 270
So far deluded, of such glory robbed ?
Yet ne'er, on this disastrous voyage bent,
Have I unheeded passed thine altar by ;
The choicest offerings burning still on each,
In hopes to raze the well-built walls of Troy. 275
Yet to this prayer at least thine ear incline ;

Grant that this coast in safety we may leave,
Nor be by Trojans utterly subdued."

He said; and Jove, with pity, saw his tears;
And, with a sign, his people's safety vouched. 280
He sent an eagle, noblest bird that flies,
Who in his talons bore a wild deer's fawn:
The fawn he dropped beside the holy shrine,
Where to the Lord of divination, Jove,
The Greeks were wont their solemn rites to pay. 285
The sign from Heaven they knew; with courage fresh
Assailed the Trojans, and the fight renewed.
Then none of all the many Greeks might boast
That he, before Tydides, drove his car
Across the ditch, and mingled in the fight. 290
His was the hand that first a crested chief,
The son of Phradmon, Ageläus, struck.
He turned his car for flight; but as he turned,
The lance of Diomed, behind his neck,
Between the shoulders, through his chest was driven; 295
Headlong he fell, and loud his armour rang.

Next to Tydides, Agamemnon came,
And Meneläus, Atreus' godlike sons;

The Ajaces both, in dauntless courage clothed ;
Idomeneus, with whom Meriones, 300
His faithful comrade, terrible as Mars ;
Eurypylus, Euæmon's noble son ;
The ninth was Teucer, who, with bended bow,
Behind the shield of Ajax Telamon
Took shelter ; Ajax o'er him held his shield ; 305
Thence looked he round, and aimed amid the crowd ;
And as he saw each Trojan, wounded, fall,
Struck by his shafts, to Ajax close he pressed,
As to its mother's sheltering arms a child,
Concealed and safe beneath the ample targe. 310
Say then, who first of all the Trojans fell
By Teucer's arrows slain ? Orsilochus,
And Ophelestes, Dæstor, Ormenus,
And godlike Lycophontes, Chromius,
And Amopaon, Polyæmon's son 315
And valiant Melanippus : all of these,
Each after other, Teucer laid in dust.
Him Agamemnon, with his well-strung bow
Thinning the Trojan ranks, with joy beheld,
And, standing at his side, addressed him thus : 320

“ Teucer, good comrade, son of Telamon,
Shoot ever thus, if thou wouldst be the light
And glory of the Greeks, and of thy sire,
Who nursed thine infancy, and in his house
Maintained, though bastard ; him, though distant far, 325
To highest fame let thine achievements raise.
This too I say, and will make good my word :
If by the grace of ægis-bearing Jove,
And Pallas, Ilium's well-built walls we raze,
A gift of honour, second but to mine, 330
I in thy hands will place ; a tripod bright,
Or, with their car and harness, two brave steeds,
Or a fair woman who thy bed may share.”

To whom in answer valiant Teucer thus :
“ Most mighty son of Atreus, why excite 335
Who lacks not zeal ? To the utmost of my power,
Since first we drove the Trojans back, I watch,
Unceasing, every chance to ply my shafts.
Eight barbèd arrows have I shot e'en now,
And in a warrior each has found its mark ; 340
That savage hound alone defeats my aim.”

At Hector, as he spoke, another shaft

He shot, ambitious of so great a prize:
He missed his aim; but Priam's noble son
Gorgythion, through the breast his arrow struck, 345
Whom, from *Æsyme* brought, a wedded bride
Of heavenly beauty, *Castianeira* bore.
Down sank his head, as in a garden sinks
A ripened poppy charged with vernal rains;
So sank his head beneath his helmet's weight. 350
At Hector yet another arrow shot
Teucer, ambitious of so great a prize;
Yet this too missed, by *Phœbus* turned aside;
But *Archeptolemus*, the charioteer
Of Hector, onward hurrying, through the breast 355
It struck, beside the nipple; from the car
He fell; aside the startled horses swerved;
And as he fell the vital spirit fled.
Deep, for his comrade slain, was Hector's grief;
Yet him, though grieved at heart, perforce he left, 360
And to *Cebriones*, his brother, called,
Then near at hand, the horses' reins to take;
He heard, and straight obeyed; then Hector leaped
Down from his glittering chariot to the ground,

His fearful war-cry shouting; in his hand 365

A ponderous stone he carried; and, intent
To strike him down, at Teucer straight he rushed.

He from his quiver chose a shaft in haste,
And fitted to the cord; but as he drew
The sinew, Hector of the glancing helm 370

Hurled the huge mass of rock, which Teucer struck
Near to the shoulder, where the collar-bone
Joins neck and breast, the spot most opportune,
And broke the tendon; paralysed, his arm
Dropped helpless by his side; upon his knees 375

He fell, and from his hand let fall the bow.
Not careless Ajax saw his brother's fall,
But o'er him spread in haste his covering shield.

Two faithful friends, Mecisteus, Echius' son,
And brave Alastor, from the press withdrew, 380
And bore him, deeply groaning, to the ships.

Then Jove again the Trojan courage fired,
And backward to the ditch they forced the Greeks.

Proud of his prowess, Hector led them on;
And as a hound that, fleet of foot, o'ertakes 385

Or boar or lion, object of his chase,

Springs from behind, and fastens on his flank,
Yet careful watches, lest he turn to bay :
So Hector pressed upon the long-haired Greeks,
Slaying the hindmost ; they in terror fled. 390
But, passed at length the ditch and palisade,
With loss of many by the Trojans slain,
Before the ships they rallied from their flight,
And one to other called ; and one and all
With hands uplifted, prayed to all the Gods ; 395
While Hector, here and there, on every side
His flying coursers wheeled, with eyes that flashed
Awful as Gorgon's, or as blood-stained Mars.
Juno, the white-armed Queen, with pity moved,
To Pallas thus her wingèd words addressed : 400
“ O Heaven, brave child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Can we, even now, in this their sorest need,
Refuse the Greeks our aid, by one subdued,
One single man, of pride unbearable,
Hector, the son of Priam, who e'en now 405
Hath caused them endless grief ? ” To whom again
The blue-eyed Goddess, Pallas, thus replied :
“ I too would fain behold him robbed of life,

In his own country slain by Grecian hands;
But that my sire, by ill advice misled, 410
Rages in wrath, still thwarting all my plans;
Forgetting now how oft his son I saved,
Sore wearied with the toils Eurystheus gave.
Oft would his tears ascend to Heaven, and oft
From Heaven would Jove despatch me to his aid; 415
But if I then had known what now I know,
When to the narrow gates of Pluto's realm
He sent him forth to bring from Erebus
Its guardian dog, he never had returned
In safety from the marge of Styx profound. 420
He holds me now in hatred, and his ear
To Thetis lends, who kissed his knees, and touched
His beard, and prayed him to avenge her son
Achilles; yet the time shall come when I
Shall be once more his own dear blue-eyed Maid. 425
But haste thee now, prepare for us thy car,
While to the house of ægis-bearing Jove
I go, and don my armour for the fight,
To prove if Hector of the glancing helm,
The son of Priam, will unmoved behold 430

Us two advancing o'er the pass of war;
Or if the flesh of Trojans, slain by Greeks,
Shall sate the maw of ravening dogs and birds."

She said: the white-armed Queen her word obeyed.
Juno, great Goddess, royal Saturn's child, 435
The horses brought, with golden frontlets crowned;
While Pallas, child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Within her father's threshold dropped her veil
Of airy texture, work of her own hands;
The cuirass donned of cloud-compelling Jove, 440
And stood accoutred for the bloody fray.
The fiery car she mounted; in her hand
A spear she bore, long, weighty, tough; wherewith
The mighty daughter of a mighty sire
Sweeps down the ranks of those her wrath pursues. 445
Then Juno sharply touched the flying steeds;
Forthwith, spontaneous opening, grated harsh
The heavenly portals, guarded by the Hours,
Who Heaven and high Olympus have in charge,
To roll aside or close the veil of cloud; 450
Through these the excited horses held their way.
From Ida's heights the son of Saturn saw,

And, filled with wrath, the heavenly messenger,
The golden-wingèd Iris, thus bespoke :
“ Haste thee, swift Iris; turn them back, and warn 455
That farther they advance not: 'tis not meet
That they and I in war should be opposed.
This too I say, and will make good my words :
Their flying horses I will lame; themselves
Dash from their car, and break their chariot-wheels; 460
And ten revolving years heal not the wound
Where strikes my lightning: so shall Pallas learn
What 'tis against her father to contend.
Juno less moves my wonder and my wrath;
Whate'er I plan, 'tis still her wont to thwart.” 465
Thus he: from Ida to Olympus' height
The storm-swift Iris on her errand sped.
At many-ridged Olympus' outer gate
She met the Goddesses, and stayed their course,
And thus conveyed the sovereign will of Jove: 470
“ Whither away? what madness fills your breasts?
To give the Greeks your succour, Jove forbids;
And thus he threatens, and will make it good:
Your flying horses he will lame; yourselves

Dash from the car, and break your chariot-wheels; 475

And ten revolving years heal not the wounds

His lightning makes: so, Pallas, shalt thou learn

What 'tis against thy father to contend.

Juno less moves his wonder and his wrath;

Whate'er he plans, 'tis still her wont to thwart; 480

But over-bold and void of shame art thou,

If against Jove thou dare to lift thy spear."

Thus as she spoke, swift Iris disappeared.

Then Juno thus to Pallas spoke: "No more,

Daughter of ægis-bearing Jove, can we 485

For mortal men his sovereign will resist;

Live they or die, as each man's fate may be;

While he, 'twixt Greeks and Trojans, as 'tis meet,

His own designs accomplishing, decides."

She said, and backward turned her horses' heads. 490

The horses from the car the Hours unyoked,

And safely tethered in the heavenly stalls;

The car they reared against the inner wall,

That brightly polished shone; the Goddesses

Themselves meanwhile, amid the Immortals all, 495

With sorrowing hearts on golden seats reclined.

Ere long, on swiftly-rolling chariot borne,
Jove to Olympus, to the abode of Gods,
From Ida's height returned: the Earth-shaking God,
Neptune, unyoked his steeds; and on the stand 500
Secured the car, and spread the covering o'er.
Then on his golden throne all-seeing Jove
Sat down; beneath his feet Olympus shook.
Juno and Pallas only sat aloof;
No word they uttered, no enquiry made. 505
Jove knew their thoughts, and thus addressed them both:
"Pallas and Juno, wherefore sit ye thus
In angry silence? In the glorious fight
No lengthened toil have ye sustained, to slay
The Trojans, whom your deadly hate pursues. 510
Not all the Gods that on Olympus dwell
Could turn me from my purpose, such my might,
And such the power of my resistless hand;
But ye were struck with terror ere ye saw
The battle-field, and fearful deeds of war. 515
But this I say, and bear it in your minds,
Had I my lightning launched, and from your car
Had hurled ye down, ye ne'er had reached again

Olympus' height, the immortal Gods' abode."

So spoke the God; but, seated side by side, 520

Juno and Pallas glances interchanged

Of ill portent for Troy; Pallas indeed

Sat silent, and, though inly wroth with Jove,

Yet answered not a word; but Juno's breast

Could not contain her rage, and thus she spoke: 525

"What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak?

Well do we know thy power invincible,

Yet deeply grieve we for the warlike Greeks,

Condemned to hopeless ruin: from the fight,

Since such is thy command, we stand aloof; 530

But yet some saving counsel may we give,

Lest in thine anger thou destroy them quite."

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied:

"Yet greater slaughter, stag-eyed Queen of Heaven,

To-morrow shalt thou see, if so thou list, 535

Wrought on the warrior Greeks by Saturn's son;

For Hector's proud career shall not be checked

Until the wrath of Peleus' godlike son

Beside the ships be kindled, in the day

When round Patroclus' corpse, in narrow space, 540

E'en by the vessels' sterns, the war shall rage.
Such is the voice of destiny: for thee,
I reckon not of thy wrath; nor should I care
Though thou wert thrust beneath the lowest deep
Of earth and ocean, where Iapetus 545
And Saturn lie, uncheered by ray of sun
Or breath of air, in Tartarus profound.
Though there thou wert to banishment consigned,
I should not heed, but thy reproaches hear
Unmoved; for viler thing is none than thou." 550
He said, but white-armed Juno answered not.
The sun, now sunk beneath the ocean wave,
Drew o'er the teeming earth the veil of night.
The Trojans saw, reluctant, day's decline;
But on the Greeks thrice welcome, thrice invoked 555
With earnest prayers, the shades of darkness fell.
The noble Hector then to council called
The Trojan leaders; from the ships apart
He led them, by the eddying river's side,
To a clear space of ground, from corpses free. 560
They from their cars dismounting, to the words
Of godlike Hector listened: in his hand

His massive spear he held, twelve cubits long,
Whose glittering point flashed bright, with hoop of gold
Encircled round; on this he leant, and said, 565
“ Hear me, ye Trojans, Dardans, and Allies;
I hoped that to the breezy heights of Troy
We might ere now in triumph have returned,
The Grecian ships and all the Greeks destroyed;
But night hath come too soon, and saved awhile 570
The Grecian army and their stranded ships.
Then yield we to the night; prepare the meal;
Unyoke your horses, and before them place
Their needful forage; from the city bring
Oxen and sheep; the luscious wine provide; 575
Bring bread from out our houses; and collect
Good store of fuel, that the livelong night,
Even till the dawn of day, may broadly blaze
Our numerous watchfires, and illumine the Heavens;
Lest, even by night, the long-haired Greeks should seek 580
O'er the broad bosom of the sea to fly,
That so not unassailed they may embark,
Nor undisturbed; but haply some may bear,
Even to their homes, the memory of a wound

Received from spear or arrow, as on board 585
They leaped in haste; and others too may fear
To tempt with hostile arms the power of Troy.
Then let the sacred heralds' voice proclaim
Throughout the city, that the stripling youths
And hoary-headed sires allot themselves 590
In several watches to the Heaven-built towers.
Charge too the women, in their houses each,
To kindle blazing fires; let careful watch
Be set, lest, in the absence of the men,
The town by secret ambush be surprised. 595
Such, valiant Trojans, is the advice I give;
And what to-night your wisdom shall approve
Will I, at morn, before the Trojans speak.
Hopeful, to Jove I pray, and all the Gods,
To chase from hence these fate-inflicted hounds, 600
By fate sent hither on their dark-ribbed ships.
Now keep we through the night our watchful guard;
And with the early dawn, equipped in arms,
Upon their fleet our angry battle pour.
Then shall I know if Tydeus' valiant son 605
Back from the ships shall drive me to the walls,

Or I, triumphant, bear his bloody spoils :
To-morrow morn his courage will decide,
If he indeed my onset will await.
But ere to-morrow's sun be high in Heaven, 610
He, 'mid the foremost, if I augur right,
Wounded and bleeding in the dust shall lie,
And many a comrade round him. Would to Heaven
I were as sure to be from age and death
Exempt, and held in honour as a God, 615
Phœbus, or Pallas, as I am assured
The coming day is fraught with ill to Greece."

Thus Hector spoke; the Trojans shouted loud:
Then from the yoke the sweating steeds they loosed,
And tethered each beside their several cars: 620
Next from the city speedily they brought
Oxen and sheep; the luscious wine procured;
Brought bread from out their houses, and good store
Of fuel gathered; wafted from the plain,
The winds to Heaven the savoury odours bore. 625
Full of proud hopes, upon the pass of war,
All night they camped; and frequent blazed their fires.
As when in Heaven, around the glittering moon

The stars shine bright amid the breathless air;
And every crag, and every jutting peak 630
Stands boldly forth, and every forest glade;
Even to the gates of Heaven is opened wide
The boundless sky; shines each particular star
Distinct; joy fills the gazing shepherd's heart.
So bright, so thickly scattered o'er the plain, 635
Before the walls of Troy, between the ships
And Xanthus' stream, the Trojan watchfires blazed.

A thousand fires, burnt brightly; and round each
Sat fifty warriors in the ruddy glare;
Champing the provender before them laid, 640
Barley and rye, the tethered horses stood
Beside the cars, and waited for the morn. 642

BOOK IX.

THUS kept their watch the Trojans; but the Greeks

Dire Panic held, companion of chill Fear,
Their bravest struck with grief unbearable.
As when two stormy winds ruffle the sea,
Boreas and Zephyr, from the hills of Thrace 5
With sudden gust descending; the dark waves
Rear high their angry crests, and toss on shore
Masses of tangled weed; such stormy grief
The breast of every Grecian warrior rent.

Atrides, heart-struck, wandered to and fro, 10
And to the clear-voiced heralds gave command
To call, but not with proclamation loud,
Each several man to council; he himself
Spared not his labour, mixing with the chiefs.
Sadly they sat in council; Atreus' son, 15
Weeping, arose; as some dark-watered fount
Pours o'er a craggy steep its gloomy stream;

Then with deep groans the assembled Greeks addressed :

“O friends! the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
Grievous, and all unlooked for, is the blow 20
Which Jove hath dealt me; by his promise led
I hoped to raze the strong-built walls of Troy,
And home return in safety; but it seems
He falsifies his word, and bids me now
Return to Argos, frustrate of my hope, 25
Dishonoured, and with grievous loss of men.
Such now appears the o'er-ruling sovereign will
Of Saturn's son, who oft hath sunk the heads
Of many a lofty city in the dust,
And yet will sink; for mighty is his hand. 30
Hear then my counsel; let us all agree
Home to direct our course; since here in vain
We strive to take the well-built walls of 'Troy.”

The monarch spoke; they all in silence heard:
In speechless sorrow long they sat: at length 35
Rose valiant Diomed, and thus he spoke:
“Atrides, I thy folly must confront, `
As is my right, in council; thou, O King!
Be not offended: once, among the Greeks

Thou heldest light my prowess, with the name 40
Of coward branding me; how justly so
Is known to all the Greeks, both young and old.
On thee the deep-designing Saturn's son
In differing measure hath his gifts bestowed:
A throne he gives thee, higher far than all; 45
But valour, noblest boon of Heaven, denies.
How canst thou hope the sons of Greece shall prove
Such heartless dastards as thy words suppose?
If homeward to return thy mind be fixed,
Depart; the way is open, and the ships, 50
Which from Mycenæ followed thee in crowds,
Are close at hand, and ready to be launched.
Yet will the other long-haired Greeks remain
Till Priam's city fall: nay, though the rest
Betake them to their ships, and sail for home, 55
Yet I and Sthenelus, we two, will fight
Till Troy be ours; for Heaven is on our side."

Thus he; the sons of Greece, with loud applause,
The speech of valiant Diomed confirmed.

Then aged Nestor rose, and thus began: 60
"Tydides, eminent thou art in war;

And in the council thy compeers in age
Must yield to thee; thy present words, no Greek
Can censure, or gainsay; and yet the end
Thou hast not reached, and object of debate. 65
But thou art young, and for thine age mightst be
My latest born; yet dost thou to the Kings
Sage counsel give, and well in season speak.
But now will I, that am thine elder far,
Go fully through the whole; and none my words 70
May disregard, not even Atrides' self.
Outcast from kindred, law, and hearth is he
Whose soul delights in fierce internal strife.
But yield we now to the influence of night:
Prepare the meal; and let the several guards 75
Be posted by the ditch, without the wall.
This duty on the younger men I lay:
Then, Agamemnon, thou thy part perform;
For thou art King supreme; the Elders all,
As meet and seemly, to the feast invite: 80
Thy tents are full of wine, which Grecian ships
O'er the wide sea bring day by day from Thrace;
Nor lack'st thou aught thy guests to entertain,

And many own thy sway; when all are met,
His counsel take, who gives the best advice; 85
Great need we have of counsel wise and good,
When close beside our ships the hostile fires
Are burning: who can this unmoved behold?
This night our ruin or our safety sees."

He said; and they, assenting, heard his speech. 90
Forth with their followers went the appointed guards,
The princely Thrasymedes, Nestor's son,
Ascalaphus, and bold Ialmenus,
Two valiant sons of Mars; Meriones,
And Aphareus, and brave Deïpyrus, 95
And godlike Lycomedes, Creon's son.
Seven were the leaders; and with each went forth
A hundred gallant youths, with lances armed.
Between the ditch and wall they took their post;
There lit their fires, and there the meal prepared. 100

Then for the assembled Elders in his tent
An ample banquet Agamemnon spread;
They on the viands, set before them, fell:
The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,
The aged Nestor first his mind disclosed; 105

He who, before, the sagest counsel gave,
Now thus with prudent words began, and said:
 "Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
With thee, Atrides, my discourse shall end,
With thee begin: o'er many nations thou 110
Hold'st sovereign sway; since Jove to thee hath given
The sceptre, and the high prerogative,
To be thy people's judge and counsellor,
'Tis thine to speak the word, 'tis thine to hear
And to determine, when some other chief 115
Suggestions offers in the general cause:
What counsel shall prevail, depends on thee:
Yet will I say what seems to me the best.
Sounder opinion none can hold than this,
Which I maintain, and ever have maintained, 120
Even from the day when thou, great King, didst bear
The fair Briseis from Achilles' tent
Despite his anger—not by my advice:
I fain would have dissuaded thee, but thou,
Following the dictates of thy wrathful pride, 125
Didst to our bravest wrong, dishonouring him
Whom even the Immortals honoured; for his prize

Thou took'st and still retain'st; but let us now
Consider, if even yet, with costly gifts
And soothing words, we may his wrath appease." 130

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus:
"Father, too truly thou recall'st my fault:
I erred, nor will deny it; as a host
Is he whom Jove in honour holds, as now
Achilles honouring, he confounds the Greeks. 135

But if I erred, by evil impulse led,
Fain would I now conciliate him, and pay
An ample penalty; before you all
I pledge myself rich presents to bestow.

Seven tripods will I give, untouched by fire; 140
Of gold, ten talents, twenty caldrons bright,
Twelve powerful horses, on the course renowned,
Who by their speed have many prizes won.

Not empty-handed could that man be deemed,
Nor poor in gold, who but so much possessed 145
As by those horses has for me been won.

Seven women too, well skilled in household cares,
Lesbians, whom I selected for myself,
That day he captured Lesbos' goodly isle,

In beauty far surpassing all their sex : 150
These will I give ; and with them will I send
The fair Briseis, her whom from his tent
I bore away ; and add a solemn oath,
I ne'er approached her bed, nor held with her
Such intercourse as man with woman holds. 155
All these shall now be his : but if the Gods
Shall grant us Priam's city to destroy,
Of gold and brass, when we divide the spoil,
With countless heaps he shall a vessel freight,
And twenty captives he himself shall choose, 160
All only less than Argive Helen fair.
And if it be our fate to see again
The teeming soil of Argos, he shall be
My son by marriage ; and in honour held
As is Orestes, who, my only son, 165
Is reared at home in luxury and ease.
Three daughters fair I have, Chrysothemis,
Iphianassa, and Laodice ;
Of these, whiche'er he will, to Peleus' house,
No portion asked for, he shall take to wife ; 170
And with her will I add such wedding gifts,

As never man before to daughter gave.
Seven prosperous towns besides; Cardamyle,
And Enope, and Ira's grassy plains;
And Pheræ, and Antheia's pastures deep, 175
Æpeia fair, and vine-clad Pedasus;
All by the sea, by sandy Pylos' bounds.
The dwellers there in flocks and herds are rich,
And, as a God, shall honour him with gifts,
And to his sceptre ample tribute pay. 180
This will I do, so he his wrath remit:
Then let him yield (Pluto alone remains
Unbending and inexorable; and thence
Of all the Gods is most abhorred of men),
To me submitting, as in royal power 185
Superior far, and more advanced in age."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:
"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Atrides, not unworthy are the gifts,
Which to Achilles thou design'st to send: 190
Then to the tent of Peleus' son in haste
Let us our chosen messengers despatch:
Whom I shall choose, let them consent to go.

Then first of all let Phoenix lead the way,
Beloved of Jove; the mighty Ajax next: 195
With them, Ulysses sage; and let them take,
Of heralds, Hodius and Eurybates.
Bring now the hallowing water for our hands;
And bid be silent, while to Saturn's son,
That he have mercy, we address our prayer." 200

He said, and well his counsel pleased them all;
The heralds poured the water on their hands;
The youths, attending, crowned the bowls with wine,
And in due order served the cups to all.
Then, their libations made, when each with wine 205
Had satisfied his soul, from out the tent
Of Agamemnon, Atreus' son, they passed;
And many a caution aged Nestor gave,
With rapid glance to each, Ulysses chief,
How best to soften Peleus' matchless son. 210

Beside the many-dashing ocean's shore
They moved along; and many a prayer addressed
To Neptune, Ocean's Earth-surrounding God,
That he to gentle counsels would incline
The haughty soul of great Æacides. 215

When to the ships and tents they came, where lay
The warlike Myrmidons, their chief they found
His spirit soothing with a sweet-toned lyre,
Of curious work, with silver band adorned;
Part of the spoil he took, when he destroyed 220
Eëtion's wealthy town; on this he played,
Soothing his soul, and sang of warriors' deeds.
Before the chief, in silence and alone
Patroclus sat, upon Achilles fixed
His eyes, awaiting till the song should cease. 225
The envoys forward stepped, Ulysses first,
And stood before him; from his couch, amazed,
And holding still his lyre, Achilles sprang,
Leaving the seat whereon they found him placed;
And at their entrance rose Patroclus too: 230
Waving his hand, Achilles, swift of foot,
Addressed them: "Welcome, friends! as friends ye come:
Some great occasion surely to my tent
Hath brought the men who are, of all the Greeks,
Despite my anger, dearest to my heart." 235
Thus as he spoke, he led them in, and placed
On couches spread with purple carpets o'er,

Then thus addressed Patroclus at his side:

"Son of Menœtius, set upon the board

A larger bowl, and stronger mix the wine, 240

And serve a cup to each: beneath my roof

This night my dearest friends I entertain."

He said; Patroclus his commands obeyed;

And in the fire-light placed an ample tray,

And on it laid of goat's flesh and of sheep's 245

A saddle each; and with them, rich in fat,

A chine of well-fed hog; Automedon

Held fast, while great Achilles carved the joints.

The meat, prepared, he fixed upon the spits:

Patroclus kindled then a blazing fire: 250

And when the fire burnt hotly, and the flame

Subsided, spread the glowing embers out,

And hung the spits above; then sprinkled o'er

The meat with salt, and lifted from the stand.

The viands cooked and placed upon the board, 255

From baskets fair Patroclus portioned out

The bread to each; the meat Achilles shared.

Facing the sage Ulysses, sat the host

On the other side the tent; and bade his friend,

Patroclus, give the Gods their honours due : 260
He in the fire the wonted offerings burnt :
They on the viands set before them fell.
The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,
Ajax to Phoenix signed : Ulysses saw
The sign, and rising, filled a cup with wine, 265
And pledged Achilles thus : " To thee I drink,
Achilles ! nobly is thy table spread,
As heretofore in Agamemnon's tent,
So now in thine ; abundant is the feast :
But not the pleasures of the banquet now 270
We have in hand : impending o'er our arms
Grave cause of fear, illustrious chief, we see ;
Grave doubts, to save, or see destroyed our ships,
If thou, great warrior, put not forth thy might.
For close beside the ships and wall are camped 275
The haughty Trojans and renowned allies :
Their watch-fires frequent burn throughout the camp ;
And loud their boast, that nought shall stay their hands,
Until our dark-ribbed ships be made their prey.
Jove too for them, with favouring augury 280
Sends forth his lightning ; boastful of his strength,

And firmly trusting in the aid of Jove,
Hector, resistless, rages; nought he fears
Or God or man, with martial fury fired.
He prays, impatient, for the approach of morn; 285
Then, breaking through the lofty sterns, resolved
To the devouring flames to give the ships,
And slay the crews, bewildered in the smoke.
And much my mind misgives me, lest the Gods
His threats fulfil, and we be fated here 290
To perish, far from Argos' grassy plains.
Up then! if in their last extremity
Thy spirit inclines, though late, to save the Greeks
Sore pressed by Trojan arms: lest thou thyself
Hereafter feel remorse; the evil done 295
Is past all cure; then thou reflect betimes
How from the Greeks to ward the day of doom.
Dear friend, remember now thy father's words,
The aged Peleus, when to Atreus' son
He sent thee forth from Phthia, how he said, 300
' My son, the boon of strength, if so they will,
Juno or Pallas have the power to give;
But thou thyself thy haughty spirit must curb,

For better far is gentle courtesy :

And cease from angry strife, that so the Greeks 305

The more may honour thee, both young and old.'

Such were the words thine aged father spoke,

Which thou hast now forgotten ; yet, e'en now,

Pause for awhile, and let thine anger cool ;

And noble gifts, so thou thy wrath remit, 310

From Agamemnon shalt thou bear away.

Listen to me, while I recount the gifts

Which in his tent he pledged him to bestow.

Seven tripods promised he, untouched by fire,

Of gold, ten talents, twenty caldrons bright, 315

Twelve powerful horses, in the course renowned,

Who by their speed have many prizes won.

Not empty-handed could that man be deemed,

Nor poor in gold, who but so much possessed

As by those horses has for him been won. 320

Seven women too, well skilled in household cares,

Lesbians, whom he selected for himself,

That day thou captur'dst Lesbos' goodly isle,

In beauty far surpassing all their sex.

These will he give ; and with them will he send 325

The fair Briseis, her whom from thy tent
He bore away ; and add a solemn oath,
He ne'er approached her bed, nor held with her
Such intercourse as man with woman holds.
All these shall now be thine : but if the Gods 330
Shall grant us Priam's city to destroy,
Of gold and brass, when we divide the spoil,
With countless heaps a vessel shalt thou freight,
And twenty captives thou thyself shalt choose,
All only less than Argive Helen fair. 335
And if it be our fate to see again
The teeming soil of Argos, thou mayst be
His son by marriage, and in honour held
As is Orestes, who, his only son,
Is reared at home in luxury and ease. 340
Three daughters fair are his, Chrysothemis,
Iphianassa, and Laodice ;
Of these whiche'er thou wilt, to Peleus' house,
No portion asked for, thou shalt take to wife ;
And with her will he add such wedding gifts, 345
As never man before to daughter gave.
Seven prosperous towns besides ; Cardamyle,

And Enope, and Ira's grassy plains,
And Pheræ, and Antheia's pastures deep,
Æpeia fair, and vine-clad Pedasus ; 350
All by the sea, by sandy Pylos' bounds.
The dwellers there in flocks and herds are rich,
And, as a God, will honour thee with gifts,
And to thy sceptre ample tribute pay.
All these he gives, so thou thy wrath remit. 355
But if thou hold Atrides in such hate,
Him and his gifts, yet let thy pity rest
On all the other Greeks, thus sore bested ;
By whom thou shalt be honoured as a God :
For great the triumph that thou now mayst gain ; 360
Even Hector's self is now within thy reach ;
For he is near at hand ; and in his pride
And martial fury deems that none, of all
Our ships contain, can rival him in arms."
Whom answered thus Achilles, swift of foot : 365
" Heaven-born Ulysses, sage in council, son
Of great Laertes, I must frankly speak
My mind at once, my fixed resolve declare :
That from henceforth I may not by the Greeks,

By this man and by that, be importuned. 370
Him as the gates of hell my soul abhors,
Whose outward words his secret thoughts belie.
Hear then what seems to me the wisest course.
On me nor Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
Nor others shall prevail, since nought is gained 375
By toil unceasing in the battle field.
Who nobly fight, but share with those who skulk;
Like honours gain the coward and the brave;
Alike the idlers and the active die:
And nought it profits me, though day by day 380
In constant toil I set my life at stake;
But as a bird, though ill she fare herself,
Brings to her callow brood the food she takes,
So I through many a sleepless night have lain,
And many a bloody day have laboured through, 385
Engaged in battle on your wives' behalf.
Twelve cities have I taken with my ships;
Eleven more by land, on Trojan soil:
From all of these abundant stores of wealth
I took, and all to Agamemnon gave; 390
He, safe beside his ships, my spoils received,

A few divided, but the most retained.
To other chiefs and Kings he meted out
Their several portions, and they hold them still ;
From me, from me alone of all the Greeks, 395
He bore away, and keeps my cherished wife ;
Well ! let him keep her, solace of his bed !
But say then, why do Greeks with Trojans fight ?
Why hath Atrides brought this mighty host
To Troy, if not in fair-haired Helen's cause ? 400
Of mortals are there none that love their wives,
Save Atreus' sons alone ? or do not all,
Who boast the praise of sense and virtue, love
And cherish each his own ? as her I loved
Even from my soul, though captive of my spear. 405
Now, since he once hath robbed me, and deceived,
Let him not seek my aid ; I know him now,
And am not to be won ; let him devise,
With thee, Ulysses, and the other Kings,
How best from hostile fires to save his ships. 410
He hath completed many mighty works
Without my aid ; hath built a lofty wall,
And dug a trench around it, wide and deep,

And in the trench hath fixed a palisade ;
Nor so the warrior-slayer Hector's might 415
Can keep in check ; while I was in the field,
Not far without the walls would Hector range
His line of battle, nor beyond the Oak
And Scæan gates would venture ; there indeed
He once presumed to meet me, hand to hand, 420
And from my onset narrowly escaped.
But as with Hector now no more I fight,
To-morrow morn, my offerings made to Jove,
And all the Gods, and freighted well my ships,
And launched upon the main, thyself shall see, 425
If that thou care to see, my vessels spread
O'er the broad bosom of the Hellespont,
My lusty crews plying the vigorous oar ;
And if the Earth-shaker send a favouring breeze,
Three days will bear us home to Phthia's shore. 430
There did I leave abundant store of wealth,
When hitherward I took my luckless way ;
Thither from hence I bear, of ruddy gold,
And brass, and women fair, and iron hoar
The share assigned me ; but my chiefest prize 435

The monarch Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
Himself who gave, with insult takes away.
To him then speak aloud the words I send,
That all may know his crimes, if yet he hope
Some other Greek by treacherous wiles to cheat, 440
Clothed as he is in shamelessness! my glance,
All brazen as he is, he dare not meet.
I share no more his counsels, nor his acts;
He hath deceived me once, and wronged; again
He shall not cozen me! Of him, enough! 445
I pass him by, whom Jove hath robbed of sense.
His gifts I loathe, and spurn; himself I hold
At a hair's worth; and would he proffer me
Tenfold or twentyfold of all he has,
Or ever may be his; or all the gold 450
Sent to Orchomenos or royal Thebes,
Egyptian, treasurehouse of countless wealth,
Who boasts her hundred gates, through each of which
With horse and car two hundred warriors march:
Nay, were his gifts in number as the sand, 455
Or dust upon the plain, yet ne'er will I
By Agamemnon be prevailed upon,

Till I have paid him back my heart's offence.
Nor e'er of Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
Will I a daughter wed ; not were she fair 460
As golden Venus, and in works renowned
As Pallas, blue-eyed Maid, yet her e'en so
I wed not ; let him choose some other Greek,
Some fitting match, of nobler blood than mine.
But should the Gods in safety bring me home ; 465
At Peleus' hands I may receive a wife ;
And Greece can boast of many a lovely maid,
In Hellas or in Phthia, daughters fair'
Of chiefs who hold their native fortresses :
Of these, at will, a wife I may select : 470
And oftentimes hath my warlike soul inclined
To take a wedded wife, a fitting bride,
And aged Peleus' wealth in peace enjoy.
For not the stores which Troy, they say, contained
In peaceful times, ere came the sons of Greece, 475
Nor all the treasures which Apollo's shrine,
The Archer-God, in rock-built Pythos holds,
May weigh with life ; of oxen and of sheep
Successful forays may good store provide ;

And tripods may be gained, and noble steeds: 480
But when the breath of man hath passed his lips,
Nor strength nor foray can the loss repair.
I by my Goddess-mother have been warned,
The silver-footed Thetis, that o'er me
A double chance of destiny impends: 485
If here remaining, round the walls of Troy
I wage the war, I ne'er shall see my home,
But then undying glory shall be mine:
If I return, and see my native land,
My glory all is gone; but length of life 490
Shall then be mine, and death be long deferred.
If others asked my counsel, I should say,
'Homeward direct your course; of lofty Troy
Ye see not yet the end; all-seeing Jove
O'er her extends his hand; on him relying 495
Her people all with confidence are filled.'
Go then; my answer to the chiefs of Greece
Speak boldly—such the privilege of age—
Bid that some better counsel they devise
To save their ships and men; their present scheme, 500
My anger unappeased, avails them nought.

But Phoenix here shall stay, and sleep to-night ;
And with the morrow he with me shall sail
And seek our native land, if so he will ;
For not by force will I remove him hence." 505

He said ; they all, confounded by his words,
In silence heard ; so sternly did he speak.
At length, in tears, the aged Phoenix spoke,
For greatly feared he for the ships of Greece :
" If, great Achilles, on returning home 510

Thy mind is set, nor canst thou be induced
To save the ships from fire, so fierce thy wrath ;
How then, dear boy, can I remain behind,
Alone ? whom with thee aged Peleus sent,
That day when he in Agamemnon's cause 515

From Phthia sent thee, inexperienced yet
In all the duties of confederate war,
And sage debate, on which attends renown.
Me then he sent, instructor of thy youth,
To prompt thy language, and thine acts to guide. 520

So not from thee, dear boy, can I consent
To part, though Heaven should undertake my age
To wipe away, and vigorous youth restore,

Such as I boasted, when from Greece I fled
Before my angry sire, Amyntor, son 525
Of Ormenus; a fair-haired concubine
Cause of the quarrel; her my father loved,
And by her love estranged, despised his wife,
My mother; oft she prayed me to seduce,
To vex the old man, my father's concubine; 530
I yielded; he, suspecting, on my head
A curse invoked, and on the Furies called
His curse to witness, that upon his knees
No child, by me begotten, e'er should sit:
His curse the Gods have heard, and ratified, 535
The infernal King, and awful Proserpine.
Then would I fain have slain him with the sword,
Had not some God my rising fury quelled,
And set before my mind the public voice,
The odium I should have to bear 'mid Greeks, 540
If branded with the name of parricide.
But longer in my angry father's house
To dwell, my spirit brooked not, though my friends
And kinsmen all besought me to remain;
And many a goodly sheep, and many a steer 545

They slew, and many swine, with fat o'erlaid,
They singed, and roasted o'er the burning coals;
And drank in many a cup the old man's wine.
Nine nights they kept me in continual watch,
By turns relieving guards. The fires meanwhile 550
Burnt constant: one beneath the porch that faced
The well-fenced court; one in the vestibule
Before my chamber door. The tenth dark night
My chamber's closely-fitting doors I broke,
And lightly vaulted o'er the court-yard fence, 555
By guards alike and servant maids unmarked.
Through all the breadth of Hellas then I fled,
Until at length to Phthia's fruitful soil,
Mother of flocks, to Peleus' realm I came,
Who kindly welcomed me, and with such love 560
As to his only son, his well-beloved,
A father shows, his generous gifts bestowed.
He gave me wealth, he gave me ample rule;
And on the bounds of Phthia bade me dwell,
And o'er the Dolopes hold sovereign sway. 565
Thee too, Achilles, rival of the Gods,
Such as thou art I made thee; from my soul

I loved thee; nor wouldst thou with others go
Or to the meal, or in the house be fed,
Till on my knee thou satt'st, and by my hand 570
Thy food were cut, the cup were tendered thee;
And often, in thy childish helplessness,
The bosom of my dress with wine was drenched:
Such care I had of thee, such pains I took,
Remembering that by Heaven's decree, no son 575
Of mine I e'er might see; then thee I made,
Achilles, rival of the Gods, my son,
That thou mightst be the guardian of mine age.
But thou, Achilles, curb thy noble rage;
A heart implacable beseems thee not. 580
The Gods themselves, in virtue, honour, strength,
Excelling thee, may yet be mollified;
For they, when mortals have transgressed, or failed
To do aright, by sacrifice and prayer,
Libations and burnt-offerings, may be soothed. 585
Prayers are the daughters of immortal Jove;
But halt, and wrinkled, and of feeble sight,
They plod in Ate's track; while Ate, strong
And swift of foot, outstrips their laggard pace,

And, dealing woe to man, o'er all the earth 590
Before them flies: they, following, heal her wounds.
Him who with honour welcomes their approach,
They greatly aid, and hear him when he prays;
But who rejects, and sternly casts them off,
To Saturn's son they go, and make their prayer 595
That Ate follow him and claim her dues.
Then to the daughters of immortal Jove,
Do thou, Achilles, show the like respect,
That many another brave man's heart hath swayed.
If to thy tent no gifts Atrides brought, 600
With promises of more, but still retained
His vehement enmity, I could not ask
That thou thy cherished anger shouldst discard,
And aid the Greeks, how great so-e'er their need.
But now large offerings hath he given, and more 605
Hath promised; and, of all the Greeks, hath sent
To pray thine aid, the men thou lov'st the best.
Discredit not their mission, nor their words.
Till now, I grant thee, none could blame thy wrath.
In praise of men in ancient days renowned, 610
This have we heard, that how-so-e'er might rage

Their hostile feuds, their anger might be still
By gifts averted, and by words appeased.
One case I bear in mind, in times long past,
And not in later days; and here, 'mid friends, 615
How all occurred, will I at length recite.
Time was, that with Ætolia's warlike bands
Round Calydon the Acarnanians fought
With mutual slaughter: these to save the town,
The Acarnanians burning to destroy. 620
This curse of war the golden-thronèd Queen
Diana sent, in anger that from her
Ceneus the first-fruits of his field withheld.
The other Gods their hecatombs received;
Diana's shrine alone no offerings decked, 625
Neglected, or o'erlooked; the sin was great;
And in her wrath the arrow-darting Queen
A savage wild-boar sent, with gleaming tusks,
Which, Ceneus' vineyard haunting, wrought him harm.
There laid he prostrate many a stately tree, 630
With root and branch, with blossom and with fruit.
Him Meleager, son of Ceneus, slew,
With youths and dogs from all the neighbouring towns

Collected; smaller force had not availed,
So huge he was, so fierce; and many a youth 635
Had by his tusks been laid upon the bier.
A fierce contention then the Goddess raised,
For the boar's head and bristly hide, between
The Acarnanian and the Ætolian bands.
While warlike Meleager kept the field, 640
So long the Acarnanians fared but ill;
Nor dared, despite the numbers of their host,
Maintain their ground before the city walls.
When he to anger yielded, which sometimes
Swells in the bosom e'en of wisest men, 645
Incensed against his mother, he withdrew
To Cleopatra fair, his wedded wife;
(Marpessa her, Evenus' daughter, bore
To Idas, strongest man of all who then
Were living, who against Apollo's self 650
For the neat-footed maiden bent his bow.
Her parents called the child Alcyone,
In memory of the tears her mother shed,
Rival of Alcyon's melancholy fate,
When by far-darting Phœbus forced away). 655

With her, retiring from the field, he nursed
His wrath; resenting thus his mother's curse,
Althæa; she her brother's death bore hard,
And prayed to Heaven above, and with her hands
Beating the solid earth, the nether powers, 660
Pluto and awful Proserpine, implored,
Down on her knees, her bosom wet with tears,
Death on her son invoking; from the depths
Of Erebus Erinnys heard her prayer,
Gloom-haunting Goddess, dark and stern of heart. 665
Soon round the gates the din of battle rose,
The towers by storm assaulted; then his aid
The Ætolian Elders and the sacred priests
With promises of great reward implored.
A fruitful plot they bade him set apart, 670
The richest land in lovely Calydon,
Of fifty acres: half for vineyard meet,
And half of fertile plain, for tillage cleared.
Upon the threshold of his lofty rooms
Old Ceneus stood, and at the portals closed 675
He knocked in vain, a suppliant to his son.
His sisters and his brother joined their prayers,

But sterner his rejection of their suit ;
The friends he valued most, and loved the best,
Yet they too failed his fixed resolve to shake ; 680
Till to his very doors the war had reached,
The foe upon the towers, the town in flames :
Then Meleager's beauteous wife, at length,
In tears, beseeching him, the thousand ills
Recalled, which on a captured town attend ; 685
The slaughtered men, the city burnt with fire,
The helpless children and deep-bosomed dames
A prey to strangers. Listening to the tale,
His spirit was roused within him ; and again
He took the field, and donned his glittering arms. 690
Thus did his act from doom the Ætolians save
Spontaneous ; yet he gained not, though he saved,
The rich reward they once were pledged to give.
But be not thou like him, nor let thy God
Turn thitherward thy thoughts ; our ships on fire, 695
Thine aid will less be prized ; come, take the gifts,
And as a God be honoured by the Greeks.
If thou hereafter, unsolicited,
The battle join, the Greeks thou mayst protect,

But not an equal share of honour gain." 700

Whom answered thus Achilles, swift of foot :

" Phoenix, my second father, reverend sire,

Such honours move me not ; my honour comes

From Jove, whose will it is that I should here

Remain beside the ships, while I retain 705

Breath in my lungs and vigour in my limbs.

This too I say, and bear it in thy mind :

Disturb me not with weeping and complaints,

To do Atrides grace ; if him thou love,

My love for thee perchance may turn to hate : 710

My friend should honour him who honours me.

But come with me, and of my kingdom half,

And equal honours shalt thou share with me.

These shall our message bear ; stay thou the while,

And on soft couch repose ; to-morrow morn 715

Will we determine or to sail or stay."

He said, and with his eyebrows gave a sign

In silence to Patroclus, to prepare

A bed for Phoenix, that without delay

The rest might leave the tent ; then thus-began 720

Ajax, the godlike son of Telamon :

“Ulysses sage, Laertes’ high-born son,
Depart we now; for this way our discourse
Can lead to no result; behoves us bear
Our tidings, all unwelcome as they are, 725
Back to the chiefs awaiting our return.
Achilles hath allowed his noble heart
To cherish rancour and malignant hate;
Nor recks he of his old companions’ love,
Wherewith we honoured him above the rest. 730
Relentless he! a son’s or brother’s death,
By payment of a fine, may be atoned;
The slayer may remain in peace at home,
The debt discharged; the other will forego,
The forfeiture received, his just revenge; 735
But thou maintain’st a stern, obdurate mood,
And for a single girl! we offer seven,
Surpassing fair, and other gifts to boot.
We now bespeak thy courtesy; respect
Thy hearth; remember that beneath thy roof 740
We stand, deputed by the general voice
Of all the host; and fain would claim to be,
Of all the Greeks, thy best and dearest friends.”

Whom answered thus Achilles, swift of foot :
" Illustrious Ajax, son of Telamon, 745
Without offence hast thou thy message given ;
But fury fills my soul, whene'er I think
How Agamemnon, 'mid the assembled Greeks,
Insulting, held me forth to public scorn,
As some dishonoured, houseless vagabond. 750
But go ye now, and bear my answer back :
No more in bloody war will I engage,
Till noble Hector, Priam's godlike son,
O'er slaughtered Greeks, your ships enwrapped in fire,
Shall reach the quarters of the Myrmidons. 755
Ere he assail my ship and tents, I think
That Hector, valiant as he is, will pause."
Thus he : they each the double goblet raised,
And, to the Gods their due libations poured,
Ulysses leading, to the ships returned. 760
Meanwhile Patroclus bade the attendant maids
Prepare a bed for Phœnix ; they obeyed,
And quickly laid the bed with fleeces warm,
And rugs, and linen light and fine o'erspread.
There slept the old man, and waited for the morn. 765

Within the tent's recess Achilles slept;
And by his side, from Lesbos captive brought,
Daughter of Phorbas, Diomedes fair:
On the other side Patroclus lay; with him
The graceful Iphis, whom, when Scyros' isle 770
He captured, and Enyes' rock-built fort,
Achilles to his loved companion gave.

When to Atreides' tent the envoys came,
The chiefs, uprising, pledged them one by one
In golden goblets; then their tidings asked. 775
First Agamemnon, King of men, enquired:
"Tell me, renowned Ulysses, pride of Greece,
What says he: will he save our ships from fire,
Or still, in wrathful mood, withhold his aid?"

To whom again Ulysses, stout of heart: 780
"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
His anger is not quenched, but fiercer still
It glows; thy gifts and thee alike he spurns;
He bids thee with the other chiefs concert
The means thy people and thy ships to save; 785
And menaces himself at early dawn
To launch his well-trimmed vessels on the main.

Nay more, he counsels others, so he says,
Homeward to turn, since here of lofty Troy
We see not yet the end; all-seeing Jove 790
O'er her extends his hand; on him relying,
Her people all with confidence are filled.
Such was his language; here before you stand
Ajax and both the heralds, sage, grave men,
Who with me went, and will confirm my words. 795
Old Phœnix left we there, so willed the chief,
That with the morrow he with him may sail,
And seek their native land, if so he will;
For not by force will he remove him hence."
Ulysses thus; they all in silence heard, 800
Amazed, so stern the message that he bore.
Long time in silence sat the chiefs of Greece.
Outspoke at length the valiant Diomed:
"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Would that thou ne'er hadst stooped with costly gifts 805
To sue for aid from Peleus' matchless son;
For he before was over-proud, and now
Thine offers will have tenfold swollen his pride.
But leave we him, according to his will,

To go or stay: he then will join the fight, 810

When his own spirit shall prompt, or Heaven inspire.

But hear ye all, and do as I advise:

Refreshed with food and wine (for therein lie

Both strength and courage), turn we to our rest;

And when the rosy-fingered morn appears, 815

Thyself among the foremost, with bold hearts,

Before our ships both horse and foot array."

He said; and all the chiefs with loud applause

His speech confirmed; then, due libations poured,

Each to his several tent they all withdrew;

Then laid them down, and sought the boon of sleep. 821

BOOK X.

IN night-long slumbers lay the other chiefs
Of all the Greeks, by gentle sleep subdued;
But not on Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
By various cares oppressed, sweet slumber fell.
As when from Jove, the fair-haired Juno's Lord, 5
Flashes the lightning, bringing in its train
Tempestuous storm of mingled rain and hail
Or snow, by winter sprinkled o'er the fields;
Or opening wide the ravenous jaws of war;
So Agamemnon from his inmost heart 10
Poured forth in groans his multitudinous grief,
His spirit within him sinking. On the plain
He looked, and there, alarmed, the watchfires saw,
Which, far advanced before the walls of Troy,
Blazed numberless; and thence of pipes and flutes 15
He heard the sound, and busy hum of men.
Upon the ships he looked, and men of Greece,

And by the roots his hair in handfuls tore
To Jove on high; deep groaned his mighty heart.
Thus as he mused, the wisest course appeared, 20
With Nestor, son of Neleus, to confer,
If they some scheme in council might devise
To ward destruction from the Grecian host.
He rose, and o'er his body drew his vest,
And underneath his well-turned feet he bound 25
His sandals fair; then o'er his shoulders threw,
Down reaching to his feet, a lion's skin,
Tawny and vast; then grasped his ponderous spear.

On Menelæus weighed an equal dread;
Nor on his eyes that night had slumber sat, 30
Lest ill befall the Greeks; who, in his cause,
Crossing the watery waste, had come to Troy,
And bold defiance to the Trojans given.
Round his broad chest a panther's skin he threw;
Then on his head his brazen helmet placed, 35
And in his brawny hand a lance he bore.
To meet his brother went he forth, of Greece
The mighty monarch, as a God revered.
Him by the ship he found, in act to arm;

And welcome was his presence to the King. 40

Then valiant Menelāus first began :

“ Why thus in arms, good brother? seek'st thou one

The Trojan camp to spy? I greatly fear

That none will undertake the task, alone

To spy the movements of the hostile camp 45

In the dark night; stout-hearted he must be.”

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus :

“ Great need, my noble brother, have we both

Of sagest counsels, if we hope the Greeks

And Grecian ships from ruin to preserve, 50

Since turned against us is the mind of Jove.

To Hector's offerings most his soul inclines ;

For never have I seen, or heard men tell,

How in one day one man has wrought such loss

As Hector, dear to Jove, yet not the son 55

Of God or Goddess, on the Greeks has wrought.

Such deeds hath he achieved, such havoc made,

As we shall long in bitter memory keep.

Haste thou amid the ships, and hither bring

Idomeneus and Ajax; I the while 60

Will Nestor rouse, and urge that he with us

The outposts visit, and instruct the guard.
To him they best will listen; for his son
Commands the watch; with him Meriones,
The follower of the King Idomeneus: 65
To them by preference hath this charge been given."

He said; and Menelāus answered thus:
"What wouldst thou have me do then? here remain
With them, and wait thy coming, or to them
Thy message give, and follow in thy steps?" 70

Him answered Agamemnon, King of men:
"Remain thou here, lest haply we might fail
To meet; for in the camp are many paths.
But thou, where'er thou go'st, each several man
Address, and ask to rise; to each his name 75
And patronymic giving; pay to each
All due respect; nor bear thee haughtily;
We like the rest must share the load of toil,
Which Jove assigns to all of mortal birth.

His brother thus with counsels wise dismissed, 80
The King to aged Nestor took his way:
Him by his tent and dark-ribbed ship he found
On a soft couch; beside him lay his arms,

His shield, two lances, and a glittering helm :
There lay the rich-wrought belt the old man wore, 85
When to the battle, armed, he led his troops ;
For nought to age's weakness would he yield.
Raising his head, and on his elbow propped,
He questioned thus Atrides : " Who art thou,
That wanderest through the encampment thus alone, 90
In the dark night, when other mortals sleep ?
Seek'st thou some mule broke loose, or comrade lost ?
Speak, nor in silence come ; what wouldst thou here ? "

To whom thus Agamemnon, King of men :
" O Nestor ! son of Neleus, pride of Greece, 95
Know me for Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
On whom hath Jove, beyond the lot of men,
Laid grief that ne'er shall end, while I retain
Breath in my lungs, and vigour in my limbs.
I wander thus, because these eyes of mine 100
Sweet slumber visits not, by cares of war
Oppressed, and harassed by the woes of Greece.
Much for the Greeks I fear ; nor keeps my mind
Its wonted firmness ; I am ill at ease ;
And leaps my troubled heart as though 'twould burst 105

My bosom's bounds ; my limbs beneath me shake.
But if thou wilt, since thou too know'st not sleep,
Together to the outposts let us go,
And see if there, by toil and sleep o'erpowered,
The guard repose, neglectful of their watch. 110
The foe is close at hand ; nor are we sure
He may not hazard e'en a night attack."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied :
"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Not all the hopes that Hector entertains 115
Shall by the Lord of counsel be fulfilled ;
For him are toil and danger yet in store,
If but Achilles of his wrath repent.
Gladly will I attend thee ; others too,
Tydides, spearman bold, Ulysses sage, 120
Ajax the swift, and Phyleus' noble son,
Should all be summoned ; and 'twere well that one
Across the camp should run, to call in haste
The godlike Ajax, and Idomeneus ;
Theirs are the farthest ships, nor near at hand. 125
But, dear to me as Meneläus is,
And highly honoured, I must blame, that thus

(Though thou shouldst take offence, I needs must say)

He sleeps, and leaves the toil to thee alone.

With all the chiefs he should be busied now, 130

Imploring aid, in this our utmost need."

To whom thus Agamemnon, King of men:

"For other times, old man, reserve thy blame;

Sometimes, I own, he lags behind, nor takes

His share of labour; not from indolence, 135

Or want of sense; but still regarding me;

Waiting from me an impulse to receive.

But now, before me was he up, and came

To visit me; and I have sent him on

To call those very men whom thou hast named. 140

Come then; for we, beside the gates, and guard

Shall find them; there my orders were to meet."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied;

"Then none can blame him; nor can any Greek

Justly refuse his summons to obey." 145

He said, and round his body wrapped his vest;

Then on his feet his sandals fair he bound,

And o'er his shoulders clasped a purple cloak,

Doubled, with ample folds, and downy pile;

Then took his spear, with point of sharpened brass, 150
And through the camp prepared to take his way.

Gerenian Nestor from his slumbers first
Ulysses, sage as Jove in council, roused,
Loud shouting; soon the voice his senses reached;
Forth from his tent he came, and thus he spoke: 155
“What cause so urgent leads you, through the camp,
In the dark night to wander thus alone?”

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:

“Ulysses sage, Laertes’ godlike son,
Be not offended; such the stress that now 160
Weighs down our army; come thou then with us,
And others let us call; with whom ’tis meet
That we should counsel take, to fight or fly.”

He said; Ulysses to the tent returned;
Then, his broad shield across his shoulders thrown, 165
Came forth again, and with them took his way.
To Diomed, the son of Tydeus, next
They went; and him they found beside his arms,
Without his tent; his comrades slept around,
Their heads upon their bucklers laid; their spears 170
Stood upright, on the butts; the burnished brass

Like Heaven's own lightning, flashing far around.
Stretched on a wild bull's hide the chief reposed,
A gay-wrought carpet rolled beneath his head.
Gerenian Nestor close behind him stood, 175
And touched him with his foot, and thus in tone
Reproachful spoke: "Arouse thee, Tydeus' son!
Why sleep'st thou thus all night? or know'st thou not
That on the very margin of the plain,
And close beside the ships the Trojans lie, 180
And little space between the camps is left?"

Quick roused from sleep, thus answered Diomed:
"Beshrew thy heart, old man! no labour seems
For thee too hard; are there not younger men
To run about the camp, and summon all 185
The several chiefs? thou dost too much, old man."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:
"True, friend, and full of wisdom are thy words;
Good sons indeed I have, and followers brave
And many, who might well my message bear; 190
But great is now the stress that lies on Greece;
For on a razor's edge is balanced now,
To all the Greeks, the chance of life or death.

Do thou then go (for thou my younger art),
And if thou pity me, thyself arouse 195
Ajax the swift, and Phyleus' noble son."
He said; the warrior round his shoulders threw,
Down reaching to his feet, a lion's hide,
Tawny and dark; and took his ponderous spear.
He went, aroused, and with him brought the chiefs. 200
 When to the guard they came, not sunk in sleep
Found they the leaders; but on wakeful watch
Intent, and all alert beside their arms.
As round a sheepfold keep their anxious watch
The dogs, who in the neighbouring thicket hear 205
Some beast, that, bold in search of prey, has come
Down from the mountain; loud the clamours rise
Of men and dogs; all sleep is banished thence;
So from their eyes was banished sleep, who watched
Through that disastrous night; still plainward turning 210
At every movement in the Trojan camp.
The old man saw, well-pleased; and thus addressed
With cheering words the captains of the guard:
"Watch ever thus, good youths; nor be surprised
By slumber, lest the foe a triumph gain." 215

This said, he crossed the ditch, and with him went
The Grecian leaders, to the council called :
With them, admitted to the conference, went
Meriones, and Nestor's noble son.
The deep-dug ditch they crossed, and sat them down 220
Upon an open space, from corpses clear ;
Where Hector from the slaughter of the Greeks
Turned back, when Evening spread her veil around :
There sat they down, and there the conference held.
Grecian Nestor first took up the word : 225
" O friends ! is any here with heart so bold
Who dares, self-confident, the Trojan camp
To enter ? there some straggler he might take,
Or in the camp itself some tidings gain,
What are their secret counsels ; if they mean 230
Here by the ships to hold their ground, or back,
Sated with victory, to the town retire.
This could he learn, and hither scatheless bring
His tidings, high as Heaven in all men's mouths
Would be his praise, and ample his reward. 235
For every captain of a ship should give
A coal-black ewe, and at her foot a lamb,

A prize beyond compare; and high should be
His place at banquets and at solemn feasts."

He said; but all the chiefs in silence heard; 240
Then rose the valiant Diomed, and said:
"Nestor, that heart is mine; I dare alone
Enter the hostile camp, so close at hand;
Yet were one comrade given me, I should go
With more of comfort, more of confidence. 245

Where two combine, one before other sees
The better course; and e'en though one alone
The readiest way discover, yet would be
His judgment slower, his decision less."

He said, and many chiefs to Diomed 250
Proffered companionship; stood forth at once,
With him to penetrate the Trojan camp,
The two Ajaces, ministers of Mars;
Stood forth Meriones, and eagerly
Stood forth the son of Nestor; Atreus' son, 255
The royal Menelâus, spearman bold,
And stout Ulysses, whose enduring heart
For every deed of valour was prepared.
Rose Agamemnon, King of men, and said:

"Tydides, comrade dearest to my soul, 260
Choose thou thine own companion, whom thou wilt;
Of all the many here that proffer aid
Him whom thou deem'st the best; nor from respect
To persons leave the better man behind,
And take the worse; nor deference show to rank, 265
Not though the purest royal blood were his."

In fear for Menelāus thus he spoke:
Then answered valiant Diomed, and said;
"If my companion I may freely choose,
How can I pass the sage Ulysses by? 270
Of ready wit, and dauntless courage, proved
In every danger; and to Pallas dear.
I should not fear, by him accompanied,
To pass through fire, and safely both return;
So far in prudence he surpasses all." 275

Whom answered thus Ulysses, stout of heart:
"Tydides, nor exaggerated praise
Bestow on me, nor censure; for thou speak'st
To those who know me all for what I am.
But go we; night wanes fast, the morn is near: 280
The stars are high in Heaven; and of the night

Two thirds are spent, one third alone remains."

He said; and both prepared to don their arms.

The youthful warrior Thrasymerdes gave

To Diomed a two-edged sword (his own 285

Had in the ship been left) and ample shield;

Then on his brows a leathern headpiece placed,

Without or peak or plume; a simple casque,

Such as is worn by youths to guard their head.

A bow, and well-filled quiver, and a sword, 290

Meriones to sage Ulysses gave;

And on his brows a leathern headpiece placed,

Well wrought within, with numerous straps secured,

And on the outside, with wild boars' gleaming tusks

Profusely garnished, scattered here and there 295

By skilful hand; the midst with felt was lined:

This from Amyntor, son of Ormenus,

Autolycus from Eleon bore away,

Spoil of his pillaged house; Autolycus

Gave to Amphidamas, Cytheran chief, 300

Who in Scandea dwelt; Amphidamas

To Molus, pledge of friendship; he again

Gave to his son, Meriones, from whom

It now encircled sage Ulysses' brow.

Thus with accoutrements and arms supplied, 305

They left their brother chiefs, and took their way.

Then close beside their path, by Pallas sent,

Rose, on the right, a heron; through the gloom

They saw it not indeed, but heard the cry.

The favouring sign with joy Ulysses hailed, 310

And thus to Pallas prayed: "Hear me, thou child

Of ægis-bearing Jove, who still hast stood

In every peril at my side, whose eye

My every movement sees; now, Goddess, now

Befriend me; grant that safe, with triumph crowned, 315

We may return, some great exploit achieved,

Such as the Trojans long may bear in mind."

Him following, thus the brave Tydides prayed:

"My voice too, child of Jove, undaunted, hear;

And be with me, as with my father erst, 320

The godlike Tydeus, when to Thebes he went,

An envoy, in advance; and left behind,

Upon Asopus' banks the mail-clad Greeks.

Smooth was the message which to Thebes he bore;

But great, his mission ended, were the deeds 325

That with thine aid he wrought; for, Goddess, thou

Wast with him, and thine arm was his defence:

So be thou now with me, and me defend.

Then on thine altar will I sacrifice

A yearling heifer, broad of brow, untamed, 330

Whereon no yoke hath mortal ever laid:

Her will I give, and tip her horns with gold."

Thus as they prayed, their prayer the Goddess heard;

Then, their devotions ended, on they fared

Through the deep dead of night, like lions twain, 335

Mid slaughter, corpses, arms, and blackened gore.

Nor, in the Trojan camp, did Hector leave

The chiefs to rest; but all to conference called,

The leaders and the councillors of Troy;

To whom his prudent speech he thus addressed: 340

"Who is there here, that for a rich reward

A noble work will undertake? A car

And two strong-collared horses, best of all

That can be found within the Grecian lines,

Shall he receive, who, to his endless praise, 345

Shall dare approach the ships; and learn if still

They keep their wonted watch, or, by our arms

Subdued and vanquished, meditate retreat,
And, worn with toil, the nightly watch neglect."
Thus Hector spoke; but all in silence heard. 350

There was one Dolon in the Trojan camp,
The herald's son, Eumedes; rich in gold
And brass; not fair of face, but swift of foot;
Amid five sisters he the only son;
Who thus to Hector and the Trojans spoke: 355

"Hector, with dauntless courage I will dare
Approach the ships, and bring thee tidings sure;
But hold thou forth thy royal staff, and swear
That I the horses and the brass-bound car
Shall have, the boast of Peleus' matchless son: 360
Not vain shall be mine errand, nor deceive
Thy hopes; right through the camp I mean to pass
To Agamemnon's tent, where all the chiefs
Debate in council, or to fight or fly."

He said; and Hector took his royal staff, 365
And swore to him: "Be witness Jove himself,
The Lord of thunder, that no Trojan man,
Thyself except, shall e'er those horses drive;
For thee they are reserved, a glorious prize."

Thus Hector swore; though unfulfilled the oath, 370
The hope to Dolon fresh assurance gave.
Forthwith, his bow across his shoulders slung,
A grisly wolfskin o'er it, on his head
A cap of marten's fur, and in his hand
A javelin, from the camp he took his way, 375
Straight to the Grecian ships; but never thence
Destined to bring the expected tidings back.

The crowd of men and horses left behind,
Briskly he moved along; Ulysses first
Marked his approach, and to Tydides said: 380
"See, from the camp where some one this way comes,
With what intent I know not; if to play
The spy about the ships, or rob the dead.
Turn we aside, and let him pass us by
A little way; we then with sudden rush 385
May seize him; or if he outstrip us both
By speed of foot, may urge him toward the ships,
Driving him still before us with our spears,
And from the city cutting off his flight."
Thus saying, 'mid the dead, beside the road 390
They crouched; he, all unconscious, hastened by.

But when such space was interposed as leave
Between the sluggish oxen and themselves*
A team of mules (so much the faster they
Through the stiff fallow drag the jointed plough), 395
They rushed upon him; at the sound he stopped,
Deeming that from the Trojan camp they came,
By Hector sent, to order his return.
Within a spear's length when they came, or less,
For foes he knew them, and to flight addressed 400
His active limbs; they rushed in hot pursuit.
And as two hounds, well practised in the chase,
With glistening fangs, unflagging, strain to catch,
In woodland glade, some pricket deer, or hare,
That flies before them, screaming; so those two, 405
Tydides and Ulysses, stout of heart,
With fiery zeal, unflagging, strained to catch
The flying Dolon, from the camp cut off;
But when the fugitive approached the ships,
Close by the guard, fresh vigour Pallas gave 410

* This comparison does not afford a very accurate criterion of the "space interposed;" which cannot be estimated without knowing the total distance within which the faster was to outstrip the slower team.

To Diomed, lest haply from the walls
Some other might anticipate his blow,
And he himself but second honours gain.
Tydides then with threatening gesture cried,
"Stop, or I hurl my spear; and small thy chance, 415
If I assail thee, of escape from death."
He said, and threw his spear; but by design
It struck him not; above his shoulder flew
The polished lance, and quivered in the ground.
Sudden he stopped, with panic paralysed: 420
His teeth all chattering, pale with fear he stood,
With faltering accents; panting, they came up
And seized him in their grasp; he thus, in tears:
"Spare but my life; my life I can redeem;
For ample stores I have of gold, and brass, 425
And well-wrought iron; and of these my sire
Would pay a generous ransom, could he learn
That in the Grecian ships I yet survived."

To whom Ulysses, deep-designing, thus:

"Be of good cheer; nor let the fear of death 430
Disturb thy mind; but tell me truly this;
How is 't that toward the ships thou com'st alone,

In the still night, when other mortals sleep?
Com'st thou perchance for plunder of the dead?
Or seek'st upon our ships to play the spy, 435
By Hector sent? or of thine own accord?"

Then Dolon thus—his knees with terror shook—
" With much persuasion, of my better mind
Hector beguiled me, offering as my prize
Achilles' horses and his brass-bound car; 440
Through the dark night he sent me, and enjoined,
Entering your hostile camp, to learn if still
Ye keep your wonted watch, or by our arms
Subdued and vanquished, meditate retreat,
And worn with toil, your nightly watch neglect." 445

To whom Ulysses thus with scornful smile:
" High soared thy hopes indeed, that thought to win
The horses of Achilles; hard are they
For mortal man to harness or control,
Save for Achilles' self, the Goddess-born. 450
But tell me truly this; when here thou cam'st,
Where left'st thou Hector, guardian chief of Troy?
Where are his warlike arms? his horses where?
Where lie the rest? and where are placed their guards?

What are their secret counsels? do they mean 455
Here by the ships to keep their ground, or back,
Sated with victory, to the town return?"

Whom Dolon answered thus, Eumedes' son:
"Thy questions all true answers shall receive;
Hector, with those who share his counsels, sits 460
In conference, far apart, near Ilus' tomb:
But for the guards thou speak'st of, noble chief,
Not one is stationed to protect the camp.
Around the Trojan fires indeed, perforce,
A watch is kept; and they, among themselves, 465
Due caution exercise: but, for the Allies,
They sleep, and to the Trojans leave the watch,
Since nor their children nor their wives are near."

To whom in answer sage Ulysses thus:
"Say now, where sleep they? with the Trojans mixed, 470
Or separate? explain, that I may know."

Whom answered Dolon thus, Eumedes' son:
"To this too will I give ye answer true;
Next to the sea the Carian forces lie;
The Pæon archers and the Leleges, 475
The Caucons, and the bold Pelasgians next;

On Thymbra's side the Lycians' lot has fallen,
The Mysians brave, the Phrygian cavalry,
And the Mæonians with their horsehair plumes.
But why of these enquire? if ye intend 480
An inroad on the camp, apart from all,
New come, the farthest off, the Thracians lie:
Rhesus their King, the son of Eioneus,
Sleeps in the midst; no steeds that e'er I saw
For size and beauty can with his compare: 485
Whiter than snow, and swifter than the wind.
With gold and silver is his chariot wrought,
His armour golden, of gigantic size,
A marvel to behold! it seems not meet
For mortal man, but for the immortal Gods. 490
But take me now in safety to the ships;
Or leave me here in fetters bound, that so,
Ere ye return, ye may approve my words,
And see if I have told you true, or no."
To whom thus Diomed with stern regard: 495
"Dolon, though good thy tidings, hope not thou,
Once in our hands, to 'scape the doom of death;
For if we now should let thee go, again

In after times thou mightst our ships approach,
As secret spy, or open enemy : 500
But if beneath my hands thou lose thy life,
No farther trouble shalt thou cause the Greeks."
He said; and as the suppliant sought in vain
To touch his beard, imploring, through his throat,
Both tendons severing, drove his trenchant blade : 505
Even while he spoke, his head was rolled in dust.
The cap of marten fur from off his head
They took, the wolf-skin, and the bow unstrung,
And javelin; these Ulysses held aloft,
And thus to Pallas prayed, who gave the spoil : 510
"Receive, great Goddess, these our gifts; to thee,
Of all the Immortals on Olympus' height,
Our offerings first we give; conduct us now,
The Thracian camp and Thracian steeds to gain."
Thus as he spoke, amid the tamarisk scrub 515
Far off he threw the trophies; then with reeds,
And twigs new broken from the tamarisk boughs,
He set a mark, lest in the gloom of night
Returning, they might haply miss the spot.
Then on they passed through arms and blackened gore, 520

And reached the confines of the Thracian camp.
There found they all by sleep subdued; their arms
Beside them on the ground, in order due,
In triple rows; and by the side of each,
Harnessed and yoked, his horses ready stood. 525
Surrounded by his warriors, Rhesus slept;
Beside him stood his coursers fleet, their reins
Suspended to the chariot's topmost rail:
Ulysses marked him as he lay, and said,
"This is the man, Tydides, these the steeds, 530
To us by Dolon, whom we slew, described.
Now then, put forth thy might; beseems it not
To stand thus idly with thine arms in hand:
Loose thou the horses; or do thou the men
Despatch, and to my care the horses leave." 535
He said: and Pallas vigour new inspired,
That right and left he smote; dire were the groans
Of slaughtered men; the earth was red with blood;
And as a lion on the untended flock
Of sheep or goats with savage onslaught springs, 540
Even so Tydides on the Thracians sprang,
Till twelve were slain; and as Tydides' sword

Gave each to death, Ulysses by the feet
Drew each aside; reflecting, that perchance
The horses, startled, might refuse to pass 545
The corpses; for as yet they knew them not.
But when Tydides saw the sleeping King,
A thirteenth victim to his sword was given,
Painfully breathing; for by Pallas' art,
He saw that night, as in an evil dream, 550
The son of Æneus standing o'er his head.
Meanwhile Ulysses sage the horses loosed;
He gathered up the reins, and with his bow
(For whip was none at hand) he drove them forth;
Then softly whistling to Tydides gave 555
A signal; he, the while, remained behind,
Musing what bolder deed he yet might do;
Whether the seat, whereon the arms were laid,
To draw away, or, lifted high in air,
To bear it off in triumph on the car; 560
Or on the Thracians farther loss inflict;
But while he mused, beside him Pallas stood,
And said, "Bethink thee, Tydeus' son, betimes
Of thy return, lest, if some other God

Should wake the Trojans, thou shouldst need to fly." 565

She said; the heavenly voice he recognized,
And mounted straight the car; Ulysses touched
The horses with his bow; and, urged to speed,
They toward the ships their rapid course pursued.

Nor idle watch Apollo kept, who saw 570
Tydides o'er the plain by Pallas led;
With anger filled, the Trojan camp he sought;
And Rhesus' kinsman, good Hippocöon,
The Thracian councillor, from sleep aroused;
Awaking, when the vacant space he viewed, 575
Where late had stood the horses; and his friends
Gasping in death, and weltering in their blood,
He groaned as on his comrade's name he called;
Then loud the clamour rose, and wild uproar,
Unspeakable, of Trojans thronging round; 580
They marvelled at the deeds; but marvelled more
How they who wrought them had escaped unscathed.

Meantime arrived where Hector's scout they slew,
Ulysses, loved of Heaven, a moment checked
His eager steeds; Tydides from the car 585
Leaped to the ground, and in Ulysses' hand

The bloody trophies placed; then mounted quick,
And toward the ships, their destined goal, urged on
The fiery horses; nothing loth, they flew.
Nestor first heard the sound, and cried, "O friends, 590
The leaders and the councillors of Greece,
Am I deceived, or is it true? methinks
The sound of horses, hurrying, strikes mine ear;
Grant Heaven, Ulysses and brave Diomed
May bring those horses from the Trojan camp; 595
Yet much I fear our bravest may have met
With some disaster 'mid the crowd of foes."
He scarce had ended, when themselves appeared,
And from the car descended: welcomed back
With cordial grasp of hands, and friendly words. 600
Gerenian Nestor first, enquiring, said:
"Tell me, renowned Ulysses, pride of Greece,
Whence come these horses? from the Trojan camp?
Or hath some God, that met you by the way,
Bestowed them, radiant as the beams of light? 605
Among the Trojans day by day I move;
'Tis not my wont, old warrior though I be,
To lag behind; but horses such as these

I never saw ; some God hath given them, sure ;
For Jove, the Cloud-compeller, loves you both, 610
And Pallas, child of ægis-bearing Jove."

To whom again the sage Ulysses thus :
" O Nestor, son of Neleus, pride of Greece,
Had they so willed, the Gods, so great their power,
E'en better horses could have given than these ; 615
But these, old man, are Thracians, newly come ;
Whose King the valiant Diomed hath slain,
And with him twelve, the best of all his band.
A scout too have we slain, by Hector sent,
And by the Trojan chiefs, to spy our camp." 620

He said, and o'er the ditch the horses drove,
Exulting in their prize ; and with him went
The other chiefs, rejoicing, through the camp.
Arrived at Diomed's well-ordered tent,
First with strong halters to the rack, where stood, 625
High-fed with corn, his own swift-footed steeds,
The horses they secured ; Ulysses then
The bloody spoils of Dolon stowed away
In the ship's stern, till fitting sacrifice
To Pallas might be offered ; to the sea 630

Descending then, they washed away the sweat,
Which on their necks, and thighs, and knees had dried;
The sweat washed off, and in the ocean waves
Themselves refreshed, they sought the polished bath;
Then, by the bath restored, and all their limbs 635
Anointed freely with the lissom oil,
Sat down to breakfast; and from flowing bowls
In Pallas' honour poured the luscious wine. 638

BOOK XI.

NOW rose Aurora from Tithonus' bed,
To mortals and Immortals bringing light;
When to the ships of Greece came Discord down,
Despatched from Jove, with dire portents of war.
Upon Ulysses' lofty ship she stood, 5
The midmost, thence to shout to either side,
Or to the tents of Ajax Telamon,
Or of Achilles, who at each extreme,
Confiding in their strength, had moored their ships.
There stood the Goddess, and in accents loud 10
And dread she called, and fixed in every breast
The fierce resolve to wage unwearied war;
And dearer to their hearts than thoughts of home
Or wished return, became the battle-field.
Atrides, loudly shouting, called the Greeks 15
To arms: himself his flashing armour donned.
First on his legs the well-wrought greaves he fixed,

Fastened with silver clasps; his ample chest
A breastplate guarded, given by Cinyras
In pledge of friendship; for in Cyprus' isle 20
He heard the rumour of the glorious fleet
About to sail for Troy; and sought with gifts
To win the favour of the mighty King.
Ten bands were there inwrought of dusky bronze,
Twelve of pure gold, twice ten of shining tin: 25
Of bronze six dragons upwards towards the neck
Their length extended, three on either side:
In colour like the bow, which Saturn's son
Placed in the clouds, a sign to mortal men:
Then o'er his shoulder threw his sword; bright flashed 30
The golden studs; the silver scabbard shone,
With golden baldrick fitted; next his shield
He took, full-sized, well-wrought, well-proved in fight;
Around it ran ten circling rims of brass;
With twenty bosses round of burnished tin, 35
And, in the centre, one of dusky bronze.
A Gorgon's head, with aspect terrible,
Was wrought, with Fear and Flight encircled round:
Depending from a silver belt it hung;

And on the belt a dragon, wrought in bronze, 40
Twined his lithe folds, and turned on every side,
Sprung from a single neck, his triple head.
Then on his brow his lofty helm he placed,
Four-crested, double-peaked, with horsehair plumes,
That nodded, fearful, from the warrior's head. 45
Then took two weighty lances, tipped with brass,
Which fiercely flashed against the face of Heaven:
Pallas and Juno thundering from on high
In honour of Mycenæ's wealthy lord.

Forthwith they ordered, each his charioteer, 50
To stay his car beside the ditch; themselves,
On foot, in arms accoutred, sallied forth,
And loud, ere early dawn, the clamour rose.
Advanced before the cars, they lined the ditch;
Followed the cars, a little space between: 55
But Jove with dire confusion filled their ranks,
Who sent from Heaven a shower of blood-stained rain,
In sign of many a warrior's coming doom,
Soon to the viewless shades untimely sent.
Meanwhile upon the slope, beneath the plain, 60
The Trojan chiefs were gathered; Hector's self,

Polydamas, Æneas, as a God

In reverence held; Antenor's three brave sons,

Agenor's godlike presence, Polybus,

And, heavenly fair, the youthful Acamas. 65

In front was seen the broad circumference

Of Hector's shield; and as amid the clouds

Shines forth the fiery dog-star, bright and clear,

Anon beneath the cloudy veil concealed;

So now in front was Hector seen, and now 70

Passed to the rear, exhorting; all in brass,

His burnished arms like Jove's own lightning flashed.

As in the corn-land of some wealthy Lord

The rival bands of reapers mow the swathe,

Barley or wheat; and fast the trusses fall; 75

So Greeks and Trojans mowed the opposing ranks;

Nor these admitted thought of faint retreat,

But still made even head; while those, like wolves,

Rushed to the onset; Discord, Goddess dire,

Beheld, rejoicing; of the heavenly powers 80

She only mingled with the combatants;

The others all were absent; they, serene,

Reposed in gorgeous palaces, for each

Amid Olympus' deep recesses built.

Yet all the cloud-girt son of Saturn blamed, 85

Who willed the victory to the arms of Troy.

He heeded not their anger; but withdrawn

Apart from all, in pride of conscious strength,

Surveyed the walls of Troy, the ships of Greece,

The flash of arms, the slayers and the slain. 90

While yet 'twas morn, and waxed the youthful day,

Thick flew the shafts, and fast the people fell

On either side; but when the hour was come

When woodmen, in the forest's deep recess,

Prepare their food, and wearied with the toil 95

Of felling loftiest trees, with aching arms

Turn with keen relish to their midday meal;

Then Grecian valour broke the opposing ranks,

As each along the line encouraged each;

First sprang the monarch Agamemnon forth, 100

And brave Bienor slew, his people's guard;

And, with the chief, his friend and charioteer,

Oileus; he, down-leaping from the car,

Stood forth defiant; but between his brows

The monarch's spear was thrust; nor aught availed 105

The brass-bound helm to stay the weapon's point;
Through helm and bone it passed, and all the brain
Was shattered; forward as he rushed, he fell.
Them left he there, their bare breasts gleaming white,
Stripped of their arms; and hastened in pursuit 110
Of Antiphus and Isus, Priam's sons,
A bastard one, and one legitimate,
Both on one car; the bastard held the reins:
Beside him stood the gallant Antiphus.
Them, as they fed their flocks on Ida's heights, 115
Achilles once had captive made, and bound
With willow saplings, till for ransom freed.
The mighty monarch, Agamemnon, drove
Through Isus' breast his spear; his weighty sword
Descended on the head of Antiphus 120
Beside the ear, and hurled him from his car;
These of their armour he despoiled in haste,
Known to him both; for he had seen them oft
Beside the ships, when thither captive brought
From Ida by Achilles, swift of foot. 125
As when a lion in their lair hath seized
The helpless offspring of a mountain doe,

And breaks their bones with ease, and with strong teeth
Crushes their tender life; nor can their dam,
Though close at hand she be, avail them aught; 130
For she herself by deadly terror seized,
Through the thick coppice and the forest flies,
Panting, and bathed in sweat, the monster's rush;
So dar'd no Trojan give those brethren aid,
Themselves in terror of the warlike Greeks. . 135
Peisander next, and bold Hippolochus,
Sons of Antimachus ('twas he who chief,
Seduced by Paris' gold and splendid gifts,
Advised the restitution to refuse
Of Helen to her Lord), the King assailed; 140
Both on one car; but from their hands had dropped
The broidered reins; bewildered there they stood;
While, with a lion's bound, upon them sprang
The son of Atreus; suppliant, in the car,
They clasped his knees; "Give quarter, Atreus' son, 145
Redeem our lives; our sire Antimachus
Possesses goodly store of brass and gold,
And well-wrought iron; and of these he fain
Would pay a noble ransom, could he hear

That in the Grecian ships we yet survived." 150

Thus they, with gentle words, and tears, imploring ;

But all ungentle was the voice they heard

In answer ; "If indeed ye be the sons

Of that Antimachus, who counsel gave,

When noble Meneläus came to Troy 155

With sage Ulysses, as ambassadors,

To slay them both, nor suffer their return,

Pay now the forfeit of your father's guilt."

He said, and with a spear-thrust through his breast

Peisander dashed to earth ; backward he fell. 160

Down leaped Hippolochus ; but Atreus' son

Severing his hands and neck, amid the throng

Sent whirling like a bowl the gory head.

These left he there ; and where the thickest throng

Maintained the tug of war, thither he flew, 165

And with him eager hosts of well-greaved Greeks.

Soon on the Trojans' flight enforced they hung,

Destroying ; foot on foot, and horse on horse ;

While from the plain thick clouds of dust arose

Beneath the armed hoofs of clattering steeds ; 170

And on the monarch Agamemnon pressed,

Still slaying, urging still the Greeks to arms.
As when amid a densely timbered wood
Light the devouring flames, by eddy winds
Hither and thither borne, fast falls the copse 175
Prostrate beneath the fire's impetuous course;
So thickly fell the flying Trojans' heads
Beneath the might of Agamemnon's arm;
And here and there, athwart the pass of war,
Was many an empty car at random whirled 180
By strong-necked steeds, of guiding hands bereft;
Stretched on the plain they lay, more welcome sight
To carrion birds than to their widowed wives.
But Hector, from the fray and din of war,
And dust, and blood, and carnage, Jove withdrew. 185
Still on Atrides pressed, the Greek pursuit
With eager shouts exciting; past the tomb
Of Ilus, ancient son of Dardanus,
And toward the fig-tree, midway o'er the plain,
Straining to gain the town, the Trojans fled; 190
While loudly shouting, his unconquered hands
With carnage dyed, Atrides urged their flight.
But when the Scæan gates and oak were reached,

They made a stand, and faced the foe's assault.
Some o'er the open plain were yet dispersed; 195
As heifers, by a lion scattered wide,
At dead of night; all fly; on one descends
The doom of death; her with his powerful teeth
He seizes, and, her neck first broken, rends,
And on her entrails gorging, laps her blood. 200
So these the monarch Agamemnon chased,
Slaying the hindmost; they in terror fled:
Some headlong, backward some, Atrides' hand
Hurled from their chariot many a warrior bold;
So forward and so fierce he bore his spear. 205
But as he neared the city, and stood beneath
The lofty wall, the Sire of Gods and men
From Heaven descended; on the topmost height
Of Ida's spring-abounding hill he sat;
And while his hand the lightning grasped, he thus 210
To golden-winged Iris gave command:
"Haste thee, swift Iris, and to Hector bear
From me this message; bid him, that as long
As Agamemnon in the van appears,
Raging, and dealing death among the ranks, 215

He from the battle keep himself aloof,
But urge the rest undaunted to maintain
The stubborn fight; but should Atrides, struck
By spear or arrow, to his car withdraw,
He shall from me receive such power to slay, 220
As to the ships shall bear him, ere the sun
Decline, and Darkness spread her hallowing shade."

Thus he; to Troy, obedient to his word,
From Ida's heights swift-footed Iris sped:
Amid the horses and the well-framed cars 225
The godlike Hector, Priam's son, she found,
And stood beside him, and addressed him thus:

"Hector, thou son of Priam, sage as Jove
In council, he the Universal Lord
Sends thee by me this message; that as long 230
As Agamemnon in the van appears,
Raging, and dealing death amid the ranks,
Thou from the battle keep thyself aloof,
But urge the rest undaunted to maintain
The stubborn fight; but should Atrides, struck 235
By spear or arrow, to his car withdraw,
Thou shalt from him receive such power to slay

As to the ships shall bear thee, ere the sun
Decline, and Darkness spread her hallowing shade."

Swift-footed Iris said, and disappeared; 240

But from his chariot Hector leaped to earth,
Hither and thither passing through the ranks,
With brandished javelins urging to the fight.
Loud, at his bidding, rose the battle-cry;
Back rolled the tide; again they faced the Greeks: 245
On the other side the Greeks their masses formed,
In line of battle ranged; opposed they stood;
And in the front, to none content to cede
The foremost place, was Agamemnon seen.

Say now, ye Nine, who on Olympus dwell, 250

Of all the Trojans and their famed Allies,
Who first opposed to Agamemnon stood.
Iphidamas, Antenor's gallant son,
Stalwart and brave; in fertile Thracia bred,
Mother of flocks; him, in his infant years, 255
His grandsire Cisseus, fair Theano's sire,
In his own palace reared; and when he reached
The perfect measure of his glorious youth,
Still in his house retained him, and to wife

Gave him his daughter; but when tidings came 260
Of Grecian warfare, from the marriage straight
Embarking, with twelve beaked ships he sailed,
That owned his sway; these on Percote's shore
He left; and came himself on foot to Troy;
Who now confronted Atreus' godlike son. 265

When near they drew, Atrides missed his aim,
His spear diverging; then Iphidamas
Beneath the breastplate, striking on his belt,
Strove with strong hand to drive the weapon home;
Yet could not pierce the belt's close-plaited work; 270
The point, encountered by the silver fold,
Was bent, like lead; then with his powerful hand
The monarch Agamemnon seized the spear,
And toward him drew, and with a lion's strength
Wrenched from his foeman's grasp; then on his neck 275
Let fall his sword, and slacked his limbs in death.
There, falling in his country's cause, he slept
The iron sleep of death; unhappy he,
Far from his virgin-bride, yet unpossessed,
Though bought with costly presents; first he gave 280
A hundred steers; and promised thousands more

Of sheep and goats from out his countless flocks.
Him Agamemnon of his arms despoiled,
And to the crowd of Greeks the trophies bore.
But when Antenor's eldest-born beheld, 285
Cōon, the observed of all men, bitterest grief
His eyes o'ershadowed, for his brother's fate;
And, unperceived by Atreus' godlike son,
Standing aside, he struck him with his spear,
Through the mid arm, beneath the elbow's bend; 290
And drove right through the weapon's glittering point.
Writhed with the pain the mighty King of men;
Yet from the combat flinched he not, nor quailed:
But grasping firm his weather-toughened spear
On Cōon rushed, as by the feet he drew 295
His father's son, Iphidamas, away,
Invoking all the bravest to his aid;
And as he drew the body toward the crowd,
Beneath the bossy shield the monarch thrust
His brass-clad spear, and slacked his limbs in death; 300
Then near approaching, even upon the corpse
Of dead Iphidamas, struck off his head:
So by Atrides' hand, Antenor's sons,

Their doom accomplished, to the shades were sent.
Then through the crowded ranks, with spear and sword, 305
And massive stones, he held his furious course,
While the hot blood was welling from his arm ;
But when the wound was dry, and stanch'd the blood,
Keen anguish then Atrides' might subdued.
As when a woman in her labour-throes 310
Sharp pangs encompass, by Lucina sent,
Who rules o'er child-birth travail, even so keen
The pangs that then Atrides' might subdued.
Mounting his car he bade his charioteer
Drive to the ships; for sore his spirit was pained; 315
But loud and clear he shouted to the Greeks :
" O friends, the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
Yours be it now our sea-borne ships to guard :
Since Jove, the Lord of counsel, through the day
Wills not that I the battle should maintain." 320
He said : and swiftly to the ships were driven
His sleek-skinned coursers ; nothing loth they flew ;
With foam their chests were flecked, with dust their flanks,
As from the field their wounded Lord they bore :
But Hector, as he saw the King retire, 325

To Trojans and to Lycians called aloud :

“ Trojans and Lycians, and ye Dardans famed
In close encounter, quit ye now like men ;
Put forth your wonted valour ; from the field
Their bravest has withdrawn, and Jove on me 330
Great glory hath shed ; now headlong on the Greeks
Urge your swift steeds, and endless honour gain.”

His words fresh courage roused in every breast :
And as a hunter cheers his sharp-fanged hounds
On forest boar or lion ; on the Greeks 335
So cheered the valiant Trojans Priam's son,
Illustrious Hector, stern as blood-stained Mars.
Bent on high deeds, himself in front advanced,
Fell on the masses as a whirlwind falls,
Lashing with furious sweep the dark-blue sea. 340

Say then, who first, who last, by Hector's hand,
Whom Jove had willed to crown with honour, died.
Assæus first, and then Autonōus,
Opites, and Opheltius, Dolops, son
Of Clytus, and Æsumnus, Agelas 345
And Orus, and the brave Hipponōus ;
All these the chiefs of Greece ; the nameless crowd

He scattered next; as when the west wind drives
The clouds, and battles with the hurricane,
Before the clearing blast of Notus driven; 350
The big waves heave and roll, and high aloft
The gale, careering, flings the ocean spray;
So thick and furious fell on hostile heads
The might of Hector. Now had fearful deeds
Been done, and Greeks beside their ships had fallen 355
In shameful rout, had not Ulysses thus
To Diomed, the son of Tydeus, called:

“Why, son of Tydeus, should we thus relax
Our warlike courage? come, stand by me now,
True friend! if Hector of the glancing helm 360
Our ships should capture, great were our disgrace.”

Whom answered thus the valiant Diomed:
“Beside thee will I stand, and still endure;
But brief will be the term of our success,
Since Jove, the Cloud-compeller, not to us, 365
But to the Trojans, wills the victory.”

He said, and from his car Thymbræus hurled,
Through the left breast transfixed: Ulysses' hand
His charioteer, the brave Molion, slew.

These left they there, no more to share the fight; 370
Then turning, spread confusion 'mid the crowd :
As turn two boars upon the hunter's pack
With desperate courage, turning so to bay,
Those two, the Trojans scattering, gave the Greeks,
From Hector flying, time again to breathe. 375
A car they seized which bore two valiant chiefs,
Sons of Percotian Merops; he, o'er all
In lore prophetic skilled, would fain at home
Have kept them from the life-destroying war :
But they, by adverse fate impelled to seek 380
Their doom of death, his warning voice despised.
These two, of strength and life at once bereft,
The son of Tydeus, valiant Diomed,
Stripped of their armour; while Ulysses slew
Hippodamus, and bold Hyperochus. 385
Thus Jove, from Ida's height beholding, held
His even scale, each party slaughtering each.
Then with his spear Tydides through the loins
Agastrophus, the son of Pæon, smote ;
No car had he at hand, whereto to fly : 390
But, ill-advised, had in the attendants' charge

His horses left far off; while he himself
Rushed 'mid the throng on foot, and met his doom.
Hector's quick glance athwart the files beheld,
And to the rescue, with a shout, he sprang, 395
The Trojan columns following; not unmoved
The valiant Diomed his coming saw,
And thus bespoke Ulysses at his side:
"On us this plague, this mighty Hector, falls:
Yet stand we firm, and boldly meet the shock." 400
He said, and, poising, hurled his ponderous spear,
And not in vain; on Hector's head it struck
His helmet's crest, but, brass encountering brass,
Himself it reached not; for the visored helm,
Apollo's gift, three-plated, stayed its force. 405
Yet backward Hector sprang amid the crowd,
And on his knees he dropped, his stalwart hand
Propped on the ground; while darkness veiled his eyes.
But ere Tydides, following up his spear,
Attained from far the spot whereon he fell, 410
Hector revived, and mounting quick his car,
Drove 'mid the crowd, and 'scaped the doom of death.
Then thus, with threatening spear, Tydides cried:

“ Yet once again, vile hound, hast thou escaped ;
Thy doom was nigh ; but thee thy God hath saved, 415
Phœbus, to whom, amid the clash of spears,
Well mayst thou pray ! We yet shall meet again ;
When I shall end thee, if a guardian God
I too may claim ; meanwhile from thee I turn,
And others seek on whom my hap may light.” 420

He said, and turned him of his arms to strip
The son of Pæon ; but beside the stone
That marked where men of old had raised a mound
To Ilus, Dardan's son, the ancient chief,
There crouching, Paris, fair-haired Helen's Lord, 425
Against the son of Tydeus bent his bow.
He from the breast of brave Agastrophus
Had stripped the corslet ; from his shoulders broad
The buckler, and the helmet from his head,
When Paris bent his bow, and not in vain 430
His arrow launched ; Tydides' dexter foot
Right through it pierced, and pinned it to the ground.
Joyous he laughed, and from his hiding place
Sprang forth, and thus in tones of triumph cried :

“ Thou hast it ! not in vain my shaft hath flown ! 435

Would that, deep buried in thy flank, it touched
Thy very life ! so should our Trojans lose
Their panic fear, who now on thee with dread,
As bleating goats upon a lion, look."

To whom, unmoved, the valiant Diomed : 440
" Poor archer, trusting to thy bow alone,
Vile slanderer and seducer ! if indeed
Thou durst in arms opposed to me to stand,
Nought would avail thy arrows and thy bow :
And now, because thy shaft hath grazed my foot, 445
Thou mak'st thine empty boast : I heed thee not,
More than a woman or a puny child :
A worthless coward's weapon hath no point.
'Tis different far with me ! though light it fall,
My spear is sharp, and whom it strikes, it slays. 450
His widow's cheeks are marked with scars of grief,
His children orphans ; rotting on the ground,
Red with his blood, he lies, his funeral rites
By carrion birds, and not by women paid."

Thus while he spoke, Ulysses, spearman bold, 455
Drew near, and stood before him ; he, behind,
Sat down protected, and from out his foot

The arrow drew ; whereat sharp anguish shot
Through all his flesh ; and mounting on his car
He bade his faithful charioteer in haste 460
Drive to the ships, for pain weighed down his soul.
Alone Ulysses stood ; of all the Greeks
Not one beside him ; all were panic-struck :
Then with his spirit, perturbed, he communed thus :
“ Me miserable ! which way shall I choose ? 465
’Twere ill indeed that I should turn to flight
By hostile numbers daunted ; yet ’twere worse
Here to be caught alone ; and Saturn’s son
With panic fear the other Greeks hath filled.
But why, my soul, admit such thoughts as these ? 470
I know that cowards from the battle fly ;
But he who boasts a warrior’s name, must learn,
Wounded or wounding, firmly still to stand.”

While in his mind and spirit thus he mused,
Onward the bucklered ranks of Trojans came, 475
And, to their harm, encircled him around.
As when a boar, by dogs and stalwart youths
Attacked, the sheltering thicket leaves, and whets
The tusks that gleam between his curved jaws ;

They crowd around, though ring his clattering tusks, 480
And, fearful though it be, await his rush :
So crowded round Ulysses, dear to Jove,
The Trojans ; he, with brandished spear aloft,
Sprang forth, and through the shoulder, from above,
Deiöpites wounded : Thöon next 485
He slew, and Ennomus ; then with his spear
Chersidamas, in act to quit his car,
Thrust through the loins below his bossy shield :
Prone in the dust, he clutched the blood-stained soil.
From these he turned ; and wounded with his spear 490
Charops, the high-born Socus' brother, son
Of Hippasus ; then forward sprang, to aid
His brother, godlike Socus ; close he stood
Before Ulysses, and addressed him thus :
" Far-famed Ulysses, as in arms, in wiles 495
Unwearied, thou this day o'er both the sons
Of Hippasus, two mighty warriors slain,
And of their armour spoiled, shalt make thy boast,
Or by my spear thyself shalt lose thy life."
He said, and on the shield's broad circle struck : 500
Through the bright shield the sturdy weapon drove,

And through the rich-wrought baldrick, from the ribs
Tearing the flesh away; but Pallas seized,
And turned it from the vital parts aside.

The wound, Ulysses knew, was not to death, 505
And back he drew, and thus to Socus cried:

“Ill-fated thou! thy doom hath found thee now!
Me hast thou hindered from the war awhile;
But thee to swift destruction and dark death
This day I doom: great glory, of thee subdued, 510
Shall I obtain, and Hades take thy soul.”

Thus he: and Socus, turning, sought to fly;
But as he turned him round, Ulysses' spear
Behind his neck, between the shoulder blades
Was driven, and through his chest; thundering he fell, 515
And o'er his fall Ulysses, vaunting, thus:

“Socus, thou son of warlike Hippasus,
Here hast thou found, nor couldst escape, thy doom.
Ill-fated thou! nor sire's nor mother's hand
Shall gather up thy bones, but carrion birds 520
O'er thee shall flap their baleful wings, and tear
Thy mangled flesh; for me, whene'er I die
The sons of Greece will build my funeral pile.”

From out his flesh, and from his bossy shield,
The spear of Socus, as he spoke, he drew ; 525
And as he drew it forth, out gushed his blood,
With anguish keen. The Trojans, when they saw
Ulysses' blood, with clamorous shouts advanced
Promiscuous ; he, retiring, shouted loud
To call his comrades ; loud as head of man 530
Could bear, he shouted thrice ; and thrice his shout
The warlike Menelæus heard, and thus
To Ajax, standing by his side, he spoke :

“ Ajax, thou Heaven-born son of Telamon,
Great chief of men, methinks I hear the voice 535
Of stout Ulysses, as though left alone,
And in the stubborn fight cut off from aid,
By Trojans over-mastered. Haste we then,
For so 'twere best, to give him present aid.
Brave though he be, yet left alone, I fear 540
Great cause we Greeks may have to mourn his loss.”

He spoke, and led the way ; the godlike chief
Followed his steps : Ulysses, dear to Jove,
Surrounded by the Trojan host they found,
As hungry jackals on the mountain side 545

Around a stag, that from an archer's hand
Hath taken hurt, yet while his blood was warm
And limbs yet served, has baffled his pursuit;
But when the fatal shaft has drained his strength,
Thirsting for blood, beneath the forest shade, 550
The jackals seize their victim; then if chance
A hungry lion pass, the jackals shrink
In terror back, while he devours the prey;
So round Ulysses, sage in council, pressed
The Trojans, many and brave, yet nobly he 555
Averted, spear in hand, the fatal hour;
Till, with his tower-like shield before him borne,
Appeared great Ajax, and beside him stood.
Hither and thither then the Trojans fled;
While with supporting arm from out the crowd 560
The warlike Menelâus led him forth,
Till his attendant with his car drew near.
Then Ajax, on the Trojans springing, slew
Doryclus, royal Priam's bastard son;
Next Pyrasus he smote, and Pandocus, 565
Lysander, and Pylartes; as a stream,
Swollen by the rains of Heaven, that from the hills

Pours down its wintry torrent on the plain ;
And many a blighted oak, and many a pine
It bears, with piles of drift-wood, to the sea : 570
So swept illustrious Ajax o'er the plain,
O'erthrowing men and horses ; though unknown
To Hector ; he, upon Scamander's banks
Was warring on the field's extremest left,
Where round great Nestor and the warlike King 575
Idomeneus, while men were falling fast,
Rose, irrepressible, the battle cry.
Hector, 'mid these, was working wondrous deeds,
With spear and car, routing the opposed youth ;
Yet had the Greeks even so their ground maintained, 580
But godlike Paris, fair-haired Helen's Lord,
'Through the right shoulder, with a three-barbed shaft,
As in the front he fought, Machaon quelled :
For him the warrior Greeks were sore afraid,
Lest he, as back the line of battle rolled, 585
Might to the foe be left ; to Nestor then
Idomeneus addressed his speech, and said :
" O Nestor, son of Neleus, pride of Greece,
Haste thee to mount thy car, and with thee take

Machaon; toward the vessels urge with speed 590

Thy flying steeds; worth many a life is his,
The skilful leech, who knows, with practised hand,
T' extract the shaft, and healing drugs apply."

He said: Gerenian Nestor at the word

Mounted his car, Machaon at his side, 595

The skilful leech, sage Æsculapius' son:

He touched his horses; toward the Grecian ships,

As was his purpose, nothing loth, they flew.

To Hector then Cebriones, who saw

Confused the 'Trojans' right, drew near, and said: 600

"Hector, we here, on the outskirts of the field,

O'erpower the Greeks; on the other side, our friends

In strange confusion mingled, horse and man,

Are driven; among them Ajax spreads dismay,

The son of Telamon; I know him well, 605

And the broad shield that o'er his shoulders hangs;

Thither direct we then our car, where most

In mutual slaughter horse and foot engage,

And loudest swells, unchecked, the battle cry."

He said, and with the pliant lash he touched 610

The sleek-skinned horses; springing at the sound,

Between the Greeks and Trojans, light they bore
The flying car, o'er bodies of the slain
And broken bucklers trampling ; all beneath
Was plashed with blood the axle, and the rails 615
Around the car, as from the horses' feet,
And from the felloes of the wheels, were thrown
The bloody gouts ; yet on he sped, to join
The strife of men, and break the opposing ranks.
His coming spread confusion 'mid the Greeks, 620
His spear awhile withheld ; then through the rest,
With sword, and spear, and ponderous stones he rushed,
But shunned the might of Ajax Telamon.

But Jove, high throned, the soul of Ajax filled
With fear ; aghast he stood ; his sevenfold shield 625
He threw behind his back, and, trembling, gazed
Upon the crowd ; then, like some beast of prey,
Foot slowly following foot, reluctant turned.
As when the rustic youths and dogs have driven
A tawny lion from the cattle fold, 630
Watching all night, and baulked him of his prey ;
Ravening for flesh, he still the attempt renews,
But still in vain : for many a javelin, hurled

By vigorous arms, confronts him to his face,
And blazing faggots, that his courage daunt; 635
Till, with the dawn, reluctant he retreat:
So from before the Trojans Ajax turned,
Reluctant, fearing for the ships of Greece.
As near a field of corn, a stubborn ass,
Upon whose sides had many a club been broke, 640
O'erpowers his boyish guides, and entering in,
On the rich forage grazes; while the boys
Their cudgels ply, but vain their puny strength,
Yet drive him out, when fully fed, with ease:
Even so great Ajax, son of Telamon, 645
The valiant Trojans and their famed Allies,
Still thrusting at his shield, before them drove:
Yet would he sometimes, rallying, hold in check
The Trojan host; then turn again to flight,
Yet barring still the passage to the ships. 650
Midway between the Trojans and the Greeks
He stood defiant; many javelins, hurled
By vigorous arms, were in their flight received
On his broad shield; and many, ere they reached
Their living mark, fell midway on the plain, 655

Fixed in the ground, in vain athirst for blood.
Him thus, hard pressed by thick-thrown spears, beheld
Eurypylus, Euxæmon's noble son.
He hastened up, and aimed his glittering spear;
And Apisaon, P'hausias' noble son, 660
Below the midriff through the liver struck,
And straight relaxed in sudden death his limbs.
Forth sprang Eurypylus to seize the spoils:
But godlike Paris saw, and as he stooped
From Apisaon's corpse to strip his arms, 665
Against Eurypylus he bent his bow,
And his right thigh transfixed; the injured limb
Disabling, in the wound the arrow broke.
He 'mid his friends, escaping death, withdrew,
And to the Greeks with piercing shout he called: 670
"O friends, the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
Turn yet again, and from the doom of death
Great Ajax save, hard pressed by hostile spears:
Scarce can I hope he may escape with life
The desperate fight; yet bravely stand, and aid 675
The mighty Ajax, son of Telamon."
Thus spoke the wounded hero: round him they

With sloping shields and spears uplifted stood :
Ajax to meet them came ; and when he reached
The friendly ranks, again he turned to bay. 680
So raged, like blazing fire, the furious fight.

Meanwhile the mares of Neleus, drenched with sweat,
Bore Nestor and Machaon from the field ;
Achilles saw, and marked them where he stood
Upon his lofty vessel's prow, and watched 685
The grievous toil, the lamentable rout.
Then on his friend Patroclus from the ship
He called aloud ; he heard his voice, and forth,
As Mars majestic, from the tent he came :
(That day commenced his evil destiny) 690
And thus Menœtius' noble son began :

“ Why call'st thou me ? what wouldst thou, Peleus' son ? ”
To whom Achilles, swift of foot, replied :
“ Son of Menœtius, dearest to my soul,
Soon must the suppliant Greeks before me kneel, 695
So insupportable is now their need.
But haste thee now, Patroclus, dear to Jove :
Enquire of Nestor, from the battle field
Whom brings he wounded ; looking from behind

Most like he seemed to Æsculapius' son, 700

Machaon: but his face I could not see,

So swiftly past the eager horses flew."

He said: obedient to his friend's command,

Quick to the tents and ships Patroclus ran.

They, when they reached the tent of Neleus' son, 705

Descended to the ground; Eurymedon

The old man's mares unharnessed from the car,

While on the beach they faced the cooling breeze,

Which from their garments dried the sweat; then turned,

And in the tent on easy seats reposed. 710

For them the fair-haired Hecamede mixed

A cordial potion; her from Tenedos,

When by Achilles ta'en, the old man brought;

Daughter of great Arsinōus, whom the Greeks

On him, their sagest councillor, bestowed. 715

Before them first a table fair she spread,

Well polished, and with feet of solid bronze;

On this a brazen canister she placed,

And onions, as a relish to the wine,

And pale clear honey, and pure barley meal: 720

By these a splendid goblet, which from home

The old man had brought, with golden studs adorned :

Four were its handles, and round each two doves

Appeared to feed ; at either end, a cup.

Scarce might another move it from the board, 725

When full ; but aged Nestor raised with ease.

In this, their goddess-like attendant first

A generous measure mixed of Pramnian wine :

Then with a brazen grater shredded o'er

The goatsmilk cheese, and whitest barley meal, 730

And of the draught compounded bade them drink.

They drank, and then, relieved the parching thirst,

With mutual converse entertained the hour.

Before the gate divine Patroclus stood :

The old man saw, and from his seat arose, 735

And took him by the hand, and led him in,

And bade him sit ; but he, refusing, said :

“ No seat for me, thou venerable sire !

I must not stay ; for he both awe and fear

Commands, who hither sent me to enquire 740

What wounded man thou hast ; I need not ask,

I know Machaon well, his people's guard.

My errand done, I must my message bear

Back to Achilles ; and thou know'st thyself,
Thou venerable sire, how stern his mood : 745
Nay sometimes blames he, where no blame is due."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied :
" Whence comes Achilles' pity for the Greeks
By Trojan weapons wounded ? knows he not
What depth of suffering through the camp prevails ? 750
How in the ships, by arrow or by spear
Sore wounded, all our best and bravest lie ?
The valiant son of Tydeus, Diomed,
Pierced by a shaft ; Ulysses by a spear,
And Agamemnon's self ; Eurypylus 755
By a sharp arrow through the thigh transfixed ;
And here another, whom but now I bring,
Shot by a bow, from off the battle field :
Achilles, valiant as he is, the while
For Grecian woes nor care nor pity feels. 760
Waits he, until our ships beside the sea,
In our despite, are burnt by hostile fires,
And we be singly slain ? not mine is now
The strength I boasted once of active limbs.
O that such youth and vigour yet were mine, 765

As when about a cattle-lifting raid
We fought the Eleans; there Itymoneus
I slew, the son of brave Hyperochus,
Who dwelt in Elis; and my booty drove.
He sought to guard the herd; but from my hand 770
A javelin struck him in the foremost ranks:
He fell, and terror seized the rustic crowd.
Abundant store of plunder from the plain
We drove; of hornèd cattle fifty herds;
As many flocks of sheep, as many droves 775
Of swine, as many wide-spread herds of goats,
And thrice so many golden-chesnut mares,
The foals of many running with their dams.
To Pylos, Neleus' city, these we drove
By night; and much it gladdened Neleus' heart, 780
That I, though new to war, such prize had won.
When morn appeared, the clear-voiced heralds called
For all to whom from Elis debts were due;
Collected thus, the Pylians' leading men
Division made; for Elis owed us much; 785
Such wrongs we few in Pylos had sustained.
The might of Hercules in former years

Had stormed our town, and all our bravest slain.
Twelve gallant sons had Neleus; I of these
Alone was left; the others all were gone. 790
Whence over-proud, the Epeians treated us
With insult, and high-handed violence.
A herd of oxen now, and numerous flock
Of sheep, the old man selected for himself,
Three hundred, with their shepherds; for to him 795
Large compensation was from Elis due.
Trained to the course, four horses, with their cars,
He for the Tripod at the Elean games
Had sent to run; these Augeas, King of men,
Detained, and bade the drivers home return, 800
Bootless, and grieving for their horses' loss.
The old man his words resenting, and his acts,
Large spoils retained; the rest among the crowd
He shared, that none might lose his portion due.
These we disposed of soon, and to the Gods 805
Due offerings made; but when the third day rose,
Back in all haste, in numbers, horse and foot,
Our foes returned; with them the Molion twins,
Yet boys, untutored in the arts of war.

Far off, by Alpheus' banks, the extremest verge 810
Of sandy Pylos, is a lofty mound,
The city of Thryum; which around, intent
To raze its walls, their army was encamped.
The plain already they had overspread;
When Pallas from Olympus' heights came down 815
In haste, and bade us all prepare for war.
On no unwilling ears her message fell,
But eager all for fight; but me, to arm
Neleus forbade, and e'en my horses hid,
Deeming me yet unripe for deeds of war. 820
Yet so, albeit on foot, by Pallas' grace
A name I gained above our noblest horse.
There is a river, Minyis by name,
Hard by Arene, flowing to the sea,
Where we, the Pylian horse, expecting morn, 825
Encamped, by troops of footmen quickly joined.
Thence in all haste advancing, all in arms,
We reached, by midday, Alpheus' sacred stream.
There, to o'er-ruling Jove our offerings made,
To Alpheus and to Neptune each a bull, 830
To Pallas, blue-eyed Maid, a heifer fair,

In ordered ranks we took our evening meal,
And each in arms upon the river's brink
Lay down to rest; for close beside us lay
The Epeians, on the town's destruction bent. 835
Then saw they mighty deeds of war displayed;
For we, as sunlight overspread the earth,
To Jove and Pallas praying, battle gave.
But when the Pylians and the Epeians met,
I first a warrior slew, and seized his car, 840
Bold spearman, Mulius; Augeas' son-in-law,
His eldest daughter's husband, Agamede,
The yellow-haired, who all the virtues knew
Of each medicinal herb the wide world grows.
Him, with my brass-tipped spear, as on he came, 845
I slew; he fell; I, rushing to his car,
Stood 'mid the foremost ranks; the Epeians brave
Fled diverse, when they saw their champion fall,
Chief of their horsemen, foremost in the fight.
With the dark whirlwind's force, I onward rushed, 850
And fifty cars I took; two men in each
Fell to my spear, and bit the bloody dust.
Then Actor's sons, the Molions, had I slain,

Had not the Earth-shaking God, their mighty sire,
Veiled in thick cloud, withdrawn them from the field. 855
Then Jove great glory to the Pylians gave;
For o'er the wide-spread plain we held pursuit,
Slaying, and gathering up the scattered arms,
Nor till corn-clad Buprasium, and the rock
Olenian, and Alesium, termed the Mound, 860
Stayed we our steeds; there Pallas bade us turn.
There the last man I slew, and left; the Greeks
Back from Buprasium drove their flying cars
To Pylos, magnifying all the name,
'Mid men, of Nestor, as 'mid Gods, of Jove. 865
Such once was I 'mid men, while yet I was;
Now to himself alone Achilles keeps
His valour; yet hereafter, when the Greeks
Have perished all, remorse shall touch his soul.
Dear friend, remember now the injunctions given 870
By old Menœtius, when from Phthian land
He sent thee forth to Agamemnon's aid:
I, and Laertes' godlike son, within,
Heard all his counsel; to the well-built house
Of Peleus we on embassy had come, 875

Throughout Achaia's fertile lands to raise
The means of war; Menœtius there we found,
Achilles, and thyself within the house;
While in the court-yard aged Peleus slew,
And to the Lord of thunder offered up 880
A fattened steer; and from a golden bowl
O'er the burnt-offering poured the ruddy wine.
We two, while ye were busied with the flesh,
Stood at the gate; surprised, Achilles rose,
And took us by the hand, and bade us sit, 885
Dispensing all the hospitable rites.
With food and wine recruited, I began
My speech, and urged ye both to join the war:
Nor were ye loth to go; much sage advice
Your elders gave; old Peleus bade his son 890
To aim at highest honours, and surpass
His comrades all; Menœtius, Actor's son,
To thee this counsel gave: 'My son,' he said,
'Achilles is by birth above thee far;
Thou art in years the elder; he in strength 895
Surpasses thee; do thou with prudent words
And timely speech address him, and advise

And guide him; he will, to his good, obey.'

"Such were the old man's words; but thou hast let
His counsel slip thy memory; yet even now 900
Speak to Achilles thus, and stir his soul,
If haply he will hear thee; and who knows
But by the grace of Heaven thou mayst prevail?
For great is oft a friend's persuasive power.
But if the fear of evil prophesied, 905
Or message by his Goddess-mother brought
From Jove, restrain him, let him send thee forth
With all his force of warlike Myrmidons,
That thou mayst be the saving light of Greece.
Then let him bid thee to the battle bear 910
His glittering arms; if so the men of Troy,
Scared by his likeness, may forsake the field,
And breathing-time afford the sons of Greece,
Toil-worn; for little pause has yet been theirs.
Fresh and unwearied, ye with ease may drive 915
To their own city, from our ships and tents,
The Trojans, worn and battle-wearied men."

Thus he; Patroclus' spirit within him burned,
And toward Achilles' tent in haste he sped.

But, running, as Ulysses' ship he passed, 920
Where was the Council and the Justice-seat,
And where were built the altars of the Gods,
There met him, halting from the battle-field,
Shot through the thigh, Eusemon's Heaven-born son,
Eurypylus; his head and shoulders dank 925
With clammy sweat, while from his grievous wound
Streamed the dark blood; yet firm was still his soul.
Menætiüs' noble son with pity saw,
And deeply sorrowing thus addressed the chief:
 "Woe for the chiefs and councillors of Greece! 930
And must ye, far from friends and native home,
Glut with your flesh the ravening dogs of Troy?
Yet tell me this, Heaven-born Eurypylus;
Still do the Greeks 'gainst Hector's giant force
Make head? or fall they, vanquished by his spear?" 935
 To whom with prudent speech, Eurypylus:
 "No source, Heaven-born Patroclus, have the Greeks,
Of aid, but all must perish by their ships:
For in the ships lie all our bravest late,
By spear or arrow struck, by Trojan hands; 940
And fiercer, hour by hour, their onset grows.

But save me now, and lead me to the ships;
There cut the arrow out, and from the wound
With tepid water cleanse the clotted blood:
Then soothing drugs apply, of healing power, 945
Which from Achilles, thou, 'tis said, hast learned,
From Chiron, justest of the Centaurs, he.
For Podalirius and Machaon both,
Our leeches, one lies wounded in the tents,
Himself requiring sore the leech's aid; 950
The other on the plain still dares the fight."

To whom again Menœtius' noble son:
"How may this be? say, brave Eurypylus,
What must I do? a messenger am I,
Sent by Gerenian Nestor, prop of Greece, 955
With tidings to Achilles; yet even so
I will not leave thee in this weary plight."

He said, and passing his supporting hand
Beneath his breast, the wounded warrior led
Within the tent; the attendant saw, and spread 960
The ox-hide couch; then as he lay reclined,
Patroclus, with his dagger, from the thigh
Cut out the biting shaft; and from the wound

With tepid water cleansed the clotted blood ;

Then, pounded in his hands, a root applied 965

Astringent, anodyne, which all his pain

Allayed ; the wound was dried, and stanch'd the blood. 967

BOOK XII.

THUS o'er the wounded chief Eurypylus
Watched in his tent Menœtius' noble son;
But hand to hand the Greeks and Trojans fought;
Nor longer might the ditch the assault repel,
Nor the broad wall above, which Greeks had built, 5
To guard their ships, and round it dug the ditch;
But to the Gods no hecatombs had paid,
That they the ships and all the stores within
Might safely keep; against the will of Heaven
The work was done, and thence not long endured. 10
While Hector lived, and Peleus' son his wrath
Retained, and Priam's city untaken stood;
So long the Grecian wall remained entire:
But of the Trojans when the best had fallen,
Of Greeks, when some were slain, some yet survived; 15
When the tenth year had seen the fall of Troy,
And Greeks, embarked, had ta'en their homeward way,

Then Neptune and Apollo counsel took
To sap the wall by aid of all the streams
That seaward from the heights of Ida flow; 20
Rhesus, Caresus, and Heptaporus,
Granicus, and Æsepus, Rhodius,
Scamander's stream divine, and Simoïs,
Where helms and shields lay buried in the sand,
And a whole race of warrior demigods: 25
These all Apollo to one channel turned;
Nine days against the wall the torrent beat;
And Jove sent rain continuous, that the wall
Might sooner be submerged; while Neptune's self,
His trident in his hand, led on the stream, 30
Washing away the deep foundations, laid,
Laborious, by the Greeks, with logs and stones,
Now by fast-flowing Hellespont dispersed.
The wall destroyed, o'er all the shore he spread
A sandy drift; and bade the streams return 35
To where of old their silver waters flowed.
Such were, in future days, to be the works
Of Neptune and Apollo; but meanwhile
Fierce raged the battle round the firm-built wall,

And frequent clattered on the turrets' beams 40
The hostile missiles: by the scourge of Jove
Subdued, the Greeks beside their ships were hemmed,
By Hector scared, fell minister of Dread,
Who with the whirlwind's force, as ever, fought.
As when, by dogs and hunters circled round, 45
A boar, or lion, in his pride of strength,
Turns on his foes, while they in close array
Stand opposite, and frequent shoot their darts;
Nor yet his spirit quails, but firm he stands
With suicidal courage; swift he turns, 50
Where best to break the circling ranks; where'er
He makes his rush, the circling ranks give way:
So Hector, here and there, amid the crowd,
Urged his companions on to cross the ditch:
The fiery steeds shrank back, and, snorting, stood 55
Upon the topmost brink; for the wide ditch
Withheld them, easy nor to leap nor cross:
For steep arose on either side the banks,
And at the top with sharpened stakes were crowned,
Thick-set and strong, which there the sons of Greece 60
Had planted, to repel the invading foes.

Scarce might a horse, with well-wheeled car attached,
Essay the passage; but on foot they burned
To make the attempt; and thus Polydamas,
Approaching near, to valiant Hector spoke: 65
 "Hector, and all ye other chiefs of Troy,
And brave Allies, in vain we seek to drive
Our horses o'er the ditch; 'tis hard to cross;
'Tis crowned with pointed stakes, and them behind
Is built the Grecian wall; there to descend 70
And from our cars in narrow space to fight
Were certain ruin. If it be indeed
The will of Jove, high-thundering, to confound
The Greeks in utter rout, and us to aid,
I should rejoice that every Greek forthwith 75
Far from his home should fill a nameless grave;
But should they turn, and we again be driven
Back from the ships, and hurried down the ditch,
Such were our loss, that scarce a messenger
Would live to bear the tidings to the town 80
Of our destruction by the rallied Greeks.
Hear then my counsel; let us all agree
With our attendants here upon the bank

To leave our horses ; and ourselves on foot,
All armed, press on where Hector leads ; the Greeks, 85
If that their doom be nigh, will make no stand."

Thus spoke Polydamas ; his counsel pleased ;
And Hector sprang, in arms, from off his car ;
Nor long, the noble Hector when they saw,
Delayed the other chiefs ; then gave command 90

Each to his own attendant, by the ditch
To keep the chariots all in due array ;
Then parting, formed in order of attack,
In five divisions, with their several chiefs.

Round Hector thronged, and bold Polydamas, 95
The best and bravest ; they who longed the most
To storm the wall, and fight beside the ships.

With them Cebriones ; for Hector left,
To guard the horses, one of lesser note.
The next division was by Paris led, 100

Agenor, and Alcatōus ; the third
By Helenus, and brave Deiphobus,
Two sons of Priam ; Asius was the third,
Asius, the son of Hyrtacus ; who brought
His towering fiery steeds from Selles' stream, 105

Hard by Arisba ; stout Æneas led
The fourth, Anchises' son, Archilochus
With him, and Acamas, Antenor's sons ;
Both skilled alike in every point of war.
Of the far-famed Allies, Sarpedon held 110
The chief command ; and for his comrades chose
Asteropæus, and the warlike might
Of Glaucus ; these o'er all the rest he held
Pre-eminent in valour, save himself,
Who o'er them all superior stood confessed. 115
These, interlaced their shields of tough bull's-hide,
With eager step advanced, and deemed the Greeks
Would, unresisting, fall before their ships.
The other Trojans and renowned Allies
The words of wise Polydamas obeyed : 120
But Asius, son of Hyrtacus, refused
His horses and his charioteer to leave,
With them advancing to assail the ships.
Blind fool, unconscious ! from before those ships,
Escaped from death, with horses and with car 125
Triumphant, to the breezy heights of Troy
He never shall return ; ill-omened fate

O'ershadowing, dooms him by the spear to fall
Of brave Idomeneus, Deucalion's son.
He toward the left inclined, what way the Greeks 130
With horse and chariot from the plain returned.
That way he drove his horses; and the gates
Unguarded found by bolt or massive bar.
Their warders held them opened wide, to save
Perchance some comrade, flying from the plain. 135
Thither he bent his course; with clamours loud
Followed his troops; nor deemed they that the Greeks
Would hold their ground, but fall amid their ships.
Little they knew; before the gates they found
Two men, two warriors of the prime, two sons 140
Illustrious of the spear-skilled Lapithæ:
Stout Polypoetes one, Pirithöus' son,
With whom Leonteus, bold as blood-stained Mars:
So stood these two before the lofty gates,
As on the mountain side two towering oaks, 145
Which many a day have borne the wind and storm,
Firm rifted by their strong continuous roots:
So in their arms and vigour confident
Those two great Asius' charge, undaunted, met.

On the other side, with shouts and wild uproar, 150
Their bull's-hide shields uplifted high, advanced
Against the well-built wall, Asius the King,
Iamenus, Orestes, Acamas
The son of Asius, and Enomāus,
And Thōon; those within to save the ships 155
Calling meanwhile on all the well-greaved Greeks;
But when they saw the wall by Trojans scaled,
And heard the cry of Greeks in panic fear,
Sprang forth those two, before the gates to fight.
As when two boars, upon the mountain side, 160
Await the approaching din of men and dogs,
Then sideways rushing, snap the wood around,
Ripped from the roots; loud clash their clattering tusks,
Till to the huntsman's spear they yield their lives;
So clattered on those champions' brass-clad breasts 165
The hostile weapons; stubbornly they fought,
Relying on their strength, and friends above:
For from the well-built towers huge stones were hurled
By those who for themselves, their tents and ships,
Maintained defensive warfare; thick they fell, 170
As wintry snow-flakes, which the boisterous wind,

Driving the shadowy clouds, spreads fast and close
O'er all the surface of the fertile earth :
So thick, from Grecian and from Trojan hands,
The weapons flew ; on helm and bossy shield 175
With grating sound the ponderous masses rang.
Then deeply groaning, as he smote his thigh
Thus spoke dismayed the son of Hyrtacus :
" O Father Jove, how hast thou loved our hopes
To falsify, who deemed not that the Greeks 180
Would stand our onset, and resistless arms !
But they, as yellow-banded wasps, or bees,
That by some rocky pass have built their nests,
Abandon not their caverned home, but wait
The attack, and boldly for their offspring fight ; 185
So from the gates these two, though two alone,
Retire not, till they be or ta'en or slain."

He said : but Jove regarded not his words ;
So much on Hector's triumph he was bent.
Like battle raged round the other gates ; but hard 190
It were for me, with godlike power, to paint
Each several combat ; for around the wall
A more than human storm of stone was poured

On every side; the Greeks, hard pressed, perforce
Fought for their ships, while all the Gods looked on 195
Indignant, who the Grecian cause upheld.
Fiercely the Lapithæ sustained the war:
Stout Polypoetes first, Pirithōus' son,
Smote, through the brass-cheeked helmet, Damasus;
Nor stayed the brazen helm the spear, whose point 200
Went crashing through the bone, that all the brain
Was shattered; onward as he rushed, he fell.
Then Pylon next, and Ormenus he slew:
Meantime Leonteus, scion true of Mars,
Struck with unerring spear Hippomachus, 205
Son of Antimachus, below the waist;
Then, drawing from the sheath his trenchant sword,
Dashed through the crowd, and hand to hand he smote
Antiphates; he, backward, fell to earth.
Menon, Iamenus, Orestes next, 210
In quick succession to the ground he brought.
From these while they their glittering armour stripped,
Round Hector thronged, and bold Polydamas,
The bravest and the best, who longed the most
To storm the wall, and burn with fire the ships. 215

Yet on the margin of the ditch they paused;
For, as they sought to cross, a sign from Heaven
Appeared, to leftward of the astonished crowd;
A soaring eagle in his talons bore
A dragon, huge of size, of blood-red hue, 220
Alive, and breathing still, nor yet subdued;
For twisting backward through the breast he pierced
His bearer, near the neck; he, stung with pain,
Let fall his prey, which dropped amid the crowd;
Then screaming, on the blast was borne away. 225
The Trojans, shuddering, in their midst beheld
The spotted serpent, dire portent of Jove:
Then to bold Hector thus Polydamas:
"Hector, in council thou reprov'st me oft
For good advice; it is not meet, thou say'st, 230
That private men should talk beside the mark,
In council or in war, but study still
Thine honour to exalt; yet must I now
Declare what seems to me the wisest course:
Let us not fight the Greeks beside their ships; 235
For thus I read the future, if indeed
To us, about to cross, this sign from Heaven

Was sent, to leftward of the astonished crowd :
A soaring eagle, bearing in his claws
A dragon, huge of size, of blood-red hue, 240
Alive ; yet dropped him ere he reached his home,
Nor to his nestlings bore the intended prey :
So we, 'een though our mighty strength should break
The gates and wall, and put the Greeks to rout,
By the same road not scatheless should return, 245
But many a Trojan on the field should leave,
Slain by the Greeks, while they their ships defend.
So would a seer, well versed in augury,
Worthy of public credit, read this sign."
To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm 250
Replied, with stern regard : " Polydamas,
This speech of thine is alien to my soul :
Thy better judgment better counsel knows.
But if in earnest such is thine advice,
Thee of thy senses have the Gods bereft, 255
Who fain wouldst have us disregard the word
And promise by the nod of Jove confirmed,
And put our faith in birds' expanded wings ;
Little of these I reckon, nor care to look,

If to the right, and toward the morning sun, 260

Or to the left, and shades of night, they fly.

Put we our trust in Jove's eternal will,

Of mortals and Immortals King supreme.

The best of omens is our country's cause.

Why shouldst thou tremble at the battle strife? 265

Though every Trojan else were doomed to die

Beside the ships, no fear lest thou shouldst fall:

Unwarlike is thy soul, nor firm of mood:

But if thou shrink, or by thy craven words

Turn back another Trojan from the fight, 270

My spear shall take the forfeit of thy life."

This said, he led the way; with joyous shouts

They followed all; then Jove, the lightning's Lord,

From Ida's heights a storm of wind sent down,

Driving the dust against the Grecian ships; 275

Which quelled their courage, and to Hector gave,

And to the Trojans, fresh incitement; they,

On their own strength, and heavenly signs relying,

Their force addressed to storm the Grecian wall.

They razed the counterscarp, the battlements 280

Destroyed; and the projecting buttresses,

Which, to sustain the towers, the Greeks had fixed
Deep in the soil, with levers undermined.
These once withdrawn, they hoped to storm the wall ;
Nor from the passage yet the Greeks withdrew, 285
But closely fencing with their bull's-hide shields
The broken battlements, they thence hurled down
A storm of weapons on the foe beneath.
Commanding from the tower in every place
Were seen the Ajaces, urging to the fight, 290
Imploring these, and those in sterner tones
Rebuking, who their warlike toil relaxed.

“ Friends, Grecians all, ye who excel in war,
And ye of moderate or inferior strength,
Though all are not with equal powers endued, 295
Yet here is work for all ! bear this in mind,
Nor toward the ships let any turn his face,
By threats dismayed ; but forward press, and each
Encourage each, if so the lightning's Lord,
Olympian Jove, may grant us to repel, 300
And backward to his city chase the foe.”

Thus they, with cheering words, sustained the war :
Thick as the snow-flakes on a wintry day,

When Jove, the Lord of counsel, down on men
His snow-storm sends, and manifests his power: 305
Hushed are the winds; the flakes continuous fall,
That the high mountain tops, and jutting crags,
And lotus-covered meads are buried deep,
And man's productive labours of the field;
On hoary Ocean's beach and bays they lie, 310
The approaching waves their bound; o'er all beside
Is spread by Jove the heavy veil of snow.
So thickly flew the stones from either side,
By Greeks on Trojans hurled, by these on Greeks;
And clattered loud through all its length the wall. 315
Nor yet the Trojans, though by Hector led,
The gates had broken, and the massive bar,
But Jove against the Greeks sent forth his son
Sarpedon, as a lion on a herd:
His shield's broad orb before his breast he bore, 320
Well-wrought, of beaten brass, which the armourer's hand
Had beaten out, and lined with stout bull's-hide;
With golden rods, continuous, all around;
He thus equipped, two javelins brandishing,
Strode onward, as a lion, mountain-bred, 325

Whom, fasting long, his dauntless courage leads
To assail the flock, though in well-guarded fold;
And though the shepherds there he find, prepared
With dogs and lances to protect the sheep,
Not unattempted will he leave the fold; 330
But, springing to the midst, he bears his prey
In triumph thence; or in the onset falls,
Wounded by javelins hurled by stalwart hands:
So, prompted by his godlike courage, burned
Sarpedon to assail the lofty wall, 335
And storm the ramparts; and to Glaucus thus,
Son of Hippolochus, his speech addressed:
 "Whence is it, Glaucus, that in Lycian land
We two at feasts the foremost seats may claim,
The largest portions, and the fullest cups? 340
Why held as Gods in honour? why endowed
With ample heritage, by Xanthus' banks,
Of vineyard, and of wheat-producing land?
Then by the Lycians should we not be seen
The foremost to affront the raging fight? 345
So may our well-armed Lycians make their boast;
'To no inglorious Kings we Lycians owe

Allegiance; they on richest viands feed;
Of luscious flavour drink the choicest wine;
But still their valour brightest shows; and they, 350
Where Lycians war, are foremost in the fight!
O friend! if we, survivors of this war,
Could live, from age and death for ever free,
Thou shouldst not see me foremost in the fight,
Nor would I urge thee to the glorious field: 355
But since on man ten thousand forms of death
Attend, which none may 'scape, then on, that we
May glory on others gain, or they on us!"

Thus he; nor Glaucus from his bidding shrank;
And forward straight they led the Lycian powers. 360
Menestheus, son of Petëus, with dismay
Observed their movement; for on his command,
Inspiring terror, their attack was made.
He looked around him to the Grecian towers,
If any chief might there be found, to save 365
His comrades from destruction; there he saw,
Of war insatiable, the Ajaces twain;
And Teucer, from the tent but newly come,
Hard by; nor yet could reach them with his voice;

Such was the din, such tumult rose to Heaven, 370
From clattering shields, and horsehair-crested helms,
And battered gates, now all at once assailed :
Before them fiercely strove the assaulting bands
To break their way ; he then Thoötes sent,
His herald, to the Ajaces, craving aid. 375

“Haste thee, Thoötes, on the Ajaces call,
Both, if it may be ; so we best may hope
To 'scape the death, which else is near at hand ;
So fierce the pressure of the Lycian chiefs,
Undaunted now, as ever, in the fight. 380
But if they too are hardly pressed, at least
Let Ajax, son of Telamon, be spared,
And with him Teucer, skilled to draw the bow.”
He said ; the herald heard, and straight obeyed ;
Along the wall, where stood the brass-clad Greeks, 385
He ran, and standing near the Ajaces, said :

“Ajaces, leaders of the brass-clad Greeks,
The son of Heaven-born Petëus craves your aid,
To share awhile the labours of his guard ;
Both, if it may be ; so he best may hope 390
To 'scape the death, which else is near at hand :

So fierce the pressure of the Lycian chiefs,
Undaunted now, as ever, in the fight.
But if ye too are hardly pressed, at least
Let Ajax, son of Telamon, be spared, 395
And with him Teucer, skilled to draw the bow."

He said: the mighty son of Telamon
Consenting, thus addressed Oileus' son:
"Ajax, do thou and valiant Lycomede
Exhort the Greeks the struggle to maintain; 400
While I go yonder, to affront the war,
To aid their need, and back return in haste."

Thus saying, Ajax Telamon set forth,
And with him Teucer went, his father's son,
While by Pandion Teucer's bow was borne. 405
At brave Menestheus' tower, within the wall,
Arrived, sore pressed they found the garrison;
For like a whirlwind on the ramparts poured
The Lycians' valiant councillors and chiefs.
They quickly joined the fray, and loud arose 410
The battle-cry; first Ajax Telamon
Sarpedon's comrade, brave Epicles, slew,
Struck by a rugged stone, within the wall

Which lay, the topmost of the parapet,
Of size prodigious; which with both his hands 415
A man in youth's full vigour scarce could raise,
As men are now; he lifted it on high,
And downward hurled; the four-peaked helm it broke,
Crushing the bone, and shattering all the skull;
He, like a diver, from the lofty tower 420
Fell headlong down, and life forsook his bones.
Teucer, meanwhile, from off the lofty wall
The valiant Glaucus, pressing to the fight,
Struck with an arrow, where he saw his arm
Unguarded; he no longer brooked the fray; 425
Back from the wall he sprang, in hopes to hide
From Grecian eyes his wound, that none might see,
And triumph o'er him with insulting words.
With grief Sarpedon saw his friend withdraw,
Yet not relaxed his efforts; Thestor's son, 430
Alcmaon, with his spear he stabbed, and back
The weapon drew; he, following, prostrate fell,
And loudly rang his arms of polished brass.
Then at the parapet, with stalwart hand,
Sarpedon tugged; and yielding to his force 435

Down fell the block entire ; the wall laid bare,
To many at once the breach gave open way.
Ajax and Teucer him at once assailed ;
This with an arrow struck the glittering belt
Around his breast, whence hung his ponderous shield ; 440
But Jove, who willed not that his son should fall
Before the ships, the weapon turned aside.
Then forward Ajax sprang, and with his spear
Thrust at the shield ; the weapon passed not through,
Yet checked his bold advance ; a little space 445
Back he recoiled, but not the more withdrew,
His soul on glory intent ; and rallying quick,
Thus to the warlike Lycians shouted loud :

“ Why, Lycians, thus your wonted might relax ?
’Tis hard for one alone, how brave soe’er, 450
Even though he break the rampart down, to force
A passage to the ships ; but on with me !
For work is here for many hands to do.”

He said ; and by the King’s rebuke abashed,
With fiercer zeal the Lycians pressed around 455
Their King and councillor ; on the other side
Within the wall the Greeks their squadrons massed ;

Then were great deeds achieved; nor through the breach
Could the brave troops of Lycia to the ships
Their passage force; nor could the warrior Greeks 460
Repel the Lycians from the ground, where they,
Before the wall, had made their footing good.
As when two neighbours, in a common field,
Each line in hand, within a narrow space,
About the limits of their land contend; 465
Between them thus the rampart drew the line;
O'er which the full-orbed shields of tough bull's-hide,
And lighter bucklers on the warriors' breasts
On either side they clove; and many a wound
The pitiless weapons dealt, on some who, turned, 470
Their neck and back laid bare; on many more
Who full in front, and through their shields were struck.
On every side the parapet and towers
With Greek and Trojan blood were spattered o'er.
Nor yet, e'en so, the Greeks to flight were driven; 475
But as a woman that for wages spins,
Honest and true, with wool and weights in hand,
In even balance holds the scales, to mete
Her humble hire, her children's maintenance;

So even hung the balance of the war, 480
Till Jove with highest honour Hector crowned,
The son of Priam ; he, the foremost, scaled
The wall, and loudly on the Trojans called :

“ On, valiant Trojans, on ! the Grecian wall
Break down, and wrap their ships in blazing fires.” 485

Thus he, exhorting, spoke ; they heard him all,
And to the wall rushed numberless, and swarmed
Upon the ramparts, bristling thick with spears.
Then Hector, stooping, seized a ponderous stone
That lay before the gates ; 'twas broad below, 490
But sharp above ; and scarce two labouring men,
The strongest, from the ground could raise it up,
And load upon a wain ; as men are now ;
But he unaided lifted it with ease,
So light it seemed, by grace of Saturn's son. 495
As in one hand a shepherd bears with ease
A full-sized fleece, and scarcely feels the weight ;
So Hector toward the portals bore the stone,
Which closed the lofty double-folding gates,
Within defended by two massive bars 500
Laid crosswise, and with one cross bolt secured.

Close to the gate he stood; and planting firm
His foot, to give his arm its utmost power,
Full on the middle dashed the mighty mass.
The hinges both gave way; the ponderous stone 505
Fell inwards; widely gaped the opening gates;
Nor might the bars within the blow sustain:
This way and that the severed portals flew
Before the crashing missile; dark as night
His lowering brow, great Hector sprang within; 510
Bright flashed the brazen armour on his breast,
As through the gates, two javelins in his hand,
He sprang; the Gods except, no power might meet
That onset; blazed his eyes with lurid fire.
Then to the Trojans, turning to the throng, 515
He called aloud to scale the lofty wall;
They heard, and straight obeyed; some scaled the wall;
Some through the strong-built gates continuous poured;
While in confusion irretrievable
Fled to their ships the panic-stricken Greeks. 520

END OF VOL. I.

- 100



